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Jubilee in the Bible

*Using the Theology of Jürgen Moltmann
to Find a New Hermeneutic*

By

Lidija Gunjević



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Lidija Gunjević

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABC	<i>Anchor Bible Commentary</i>
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
AnBib	<i>Analecta Biblica</i>
ANE	Ancient Near East
ANET	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i>
ASOR	<i>American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BBB	<i>Bonner Biblische Beiträge</i>
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
B.C.E.	Before the Common/Current/Christian Era or Before Christ
BETL	<i>Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium</i>
BETS	<i>Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BibInt	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BIS	<i>Biblical Interpretation Series</i>
BJs	<i>Brown Judaic Studies</i>
BS	<i>Biblical Seminar</i>
BST	<i>Bible Speaks Today</i>
BiOr	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
BTB	<i>Biblical Theological Bulletin</i>
BZAW	<i>Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
CBC	<i>Cambridge Bible Commentary</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CC	Book of the Covenant
D	Deuteronomy/Deuteronomistic Source
DCH	<i>Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i>
DI	Deutero-Isaiah
DSB	<i>Daily Study Bible</i>
ed(s).	Editor(s), edited by
e.g.	exempli gratia, for example
EQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
ET	English Translation
Et al.	Et alia, and others
Etc.	Et cetera, and other things, and so forth
ff.	following

FI	First Isaiah
H	Holiness Code
HALOT	<i>Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
HAT	<i>Handbuch zum Alten Testament</i>
HB	Hebrew Bible
Ibid	the same place
i.e.	id est, that is
IKaZ	<i>Internationale katholische Zeitschrift</i>
IB	<i>Interpreter's Bible</i>
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
JANES	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JBLDS	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series</i>
JBLMS	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JPS	<i>Jewish Publication Society</i>
JPSTC	<i>JPS Torah Commentary</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JR	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSS	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series</i>
LNTS	<i>Library of New Testament Studies</i>
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NovT	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	<i>Novum Testamentum Supplements</i>
OBO	<i>Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis</i>
P	Priestly source
RAW	<i>Religions of the Ancient World</i>
RBL	<i>Review of Biblical Literature</i>
SBL	<i>Society for Biblical Literature</i>
SBLDS	<i>Society for Biblical Literature Dissertation Series</i>
SBLMS	<i>Society for Biblical Literature Monograph Series</i>
SNTSMS	<i>Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series</i>
SBS	<i>Stuttgarter Bibelstudien</i>

SHR	<i>Studies in the History of Religions</i>
SJLA	<i>Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity</i>
SJOT	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SJT	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
TB	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
TDOT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i>
TI	Trito-Isaiah
TLOT	<i>Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
TNTC	<i>Tyndale New Testament Commentaries</i>
TOTC	<i>Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries</i>
v(v)	verse(s)
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	<i>Vetus Testamentum Supplements</i>
WBC	<i>Word Biblical Commentary</i>
WUNT	<i>Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament</i>
ZABR	<i>Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

Introduction

The biblical message of Jubilee has exercised a great influence on the religious imagination of God's people at various times throughout history. The year of Jubilee has been a symbol of spiritual and material freedom and has motivated efforts to accomplish it. It has emphasised the significant life in freedom for all creation and the values of socio-economic justice. Regarding biblical socio-economic justice and its reform, it has had great potential for making a positive contribution to all those who have been seeking to shape society according to the biblical principles of Jubilee.

In addition the biblical message of Jubilee is becoming more credible in our days¹ in dealing with the socio-economic and moral-spiritual issues of today's world. These main socio-economic and moral-spiritual issues of our times are poverty, modern-day slavery and the global financial crisis.² Around

1 The biblical idea of Jubilee was of considerable and significant interest as the Millennium—the year 2000—approached. The year 2000 was the 26th Jubilee declared by the Roman Catholic Church. Pope Boniface VIII established the first Jubilee in the year 1300 (Leiter 2002, 182). Pope John Paul II's Apostolic letter *Tertio Millennio adveniente* (*As the Third Millennium Approaches*) was published in 1994. This was officially the beginning of the preparation for the coming of the Great Jubilee in 2000. Pope John Paul II underlined that the Jubilee 2000 is the sign of the beginning of his pontificate. He started the Great Jubilee by opening the holy door of St. Peter's Basilica as a symbol of opening the doors of grace and forgiveness. The open door of the Jubilee symbolically presented a new millennium for humanity. The opening of the door of St. Peter's Basilica included some special elements, such as the Proclamation of the Jubilee 2000. (Marini, 1999).

2 It is important to mention two highly debated books on the topic of debt written by Greaber and Lazzarato. Interestingly, both authors of these books come from the radical left political spectrum and both of them take religion very seriously. Greaber wrote the monumental book on the genealogy of debt called *Debt—The First 5000 years*. Greaber divided the human history of debt into five eras.

1. Age of the First Agrarian Empires (3500–800 B.C.E.), dominant money form: virtual credit money
2. Axial Age (800 B.C.E.–600 C.E.), dominant money form: coinage and metal bullion
3. The Middle Ages (600 C.E.–1500 C.E.), the return to virtual credit money
4. Age of European Empires (1500–1971 C.E.), the return of precious metals
5. Current Era (1971 onwards), the empire of debt (Greaber 2011).

Lazzarato wrote the book called *The Making of the Indebted Man—An Essay on the Neoliberal Condition*. Lazzarato's book is a philosophical reflection on the 'indebted man' (*homo debi-*

one billion people, or one sixth of humanity, are considered to be the extreme poor or the poorest in the world. The world's poorest countries today have been suffering under the heavy weight of debt repayments to international and bilateral lenders. More than eight million people around the world die each year because of poverty (Sachs 2005, 18–20). All of them live in Third World countries and they have been fighting for survival on a daily basis.³ “The greatest tragedy of our time is that one sixth of humanity is not even on the development ladder. A large number of the extreme poor are caught in a poverty trap, unable on their own to escape from extreme material deprivation. They are trapped by disease, physical isolation, climate stress, environmental degradation, and by extreme poverty itself.” (Sachs 2005, 19).

Millions of people around the world have been forced to live their lives as slaves. Even though this mistreatment is often not called slavery, the conditions are the same. People are sold like objects, forced to work for little or no pay. Modern-day slavery takes a variety of forms and affects people of every age, gender and race. There are an estimated 27 million slaves in the world today, more than at any other time in history, according to International Justice Mission.⁴ The global financial crisis has resulted in the collapse of large financial

tor). He tried to prove that the fundamental social relationship is a relationship between creditor and debtor. He does not explicitly say that *homo debitor* is our neighbour but he concludes his book saying that we are all Greeks today. It means that we all live as indebted families, communities, cities and states. Debt becomes not only a lifestyle but also a form of control and oppression (Lazzarato 2011, 166).

- 3 Regarding the definition of poverty, it is possible to distinguish between extreme poverty, moderate poverty and relative poverty. Extreme or absolute poverty describes those people in developing countries who are not able to meet their existential needs for survival (lack of: food, water, clothes, housing, health care, sanitation, education). Moderate poverty describes those people who can only barely meet their existential and basic needs. Relative poverty includes a household income level below the average national income. People in relative poverty lack access to health care, education, recreation, holidays, cultural goods, etc. The daily income of the extreme poor is measured in pennies. They are chronically hungry and thirsty. The next level of poverty can be found, for example, in Bangladesh. In this category, people have a low income but their daily survival is assured. However, they struggle with financial hardship and existential needs, such as safe drinking water or hygienic facilities. Those who live in extreme poverty (cc. 1 billion people) and the poor people (cc. 1.5 billion people) make up around 40 % of all humankind (Sachs 2005, 1, 18–20).
- 4 Bonded labour affects all those who take a loan in order to meet their existential needs. And unfortunately, many can never pay off their loans, which can be passed down through generations. Forced work affects people who are illegally recruited and forced to labour, usually under threats of violence or other punishment. Slavery by descent refers to people

institutions, downturns in stock markets, prolonged unemployment, a downturn in economic activity, the collapse of the banking system. These categories of poverty, modern-day slavery and the global financial crisis confront us all.

The influence of the biblical message of Jubilee on religious thought and life has been most recently visible in various places in dealing with the problems of today's world. For example, this influence was seen in the celebration of the Jubilee year in the year 2000 by many Christian communities, in the United Nations Millennium Declaration in 2002,⁵ in the global petition of 'The Jubilee 2000 campaign'⁶ and through many different organisations with a biblical Jubilee mission.⁷ Thus, it is obvious that the biblical message of

who are born into slavery. Early and forced marriage affects women who are married without their consent, and they are forced into lives of servitude often accompanied by violent treatment. Trafficking involves the transportation or trafficking of people from one region to another with the intention of forcing them into slavery. See more in: <http://www.ijm.org/our-work/injustice-today> (May 18, 2013). Child labour affects children around the world in work that is destructive to their health, safety and future. About 2 million children are exploited in the global commercial sex trade (UNICEF). See <http://www.ijm.org>.

- 5 "... the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the eight goals that all 191 UN member states unanimously agreed to in 2002 by signing the United Nations Millennium Declaration. These goals are important targets for cutting poverty in half by the year 2015, compared with a baseline of 1990 ... MDG are: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; develop a global partnership for development. The first seven goals call for sharp cuts in poverty, disease, and environmental degradation. The eighth goal is essentially a commitment of global partnership, a pact of rich and poor countries to work together to achieve the first seven goals ..." (Sachs 2005, 25, 211–213).
- 6 'The Jubilee 2000 campaign' attracted a wide cooperation of religious organisations and NGOs. The movement's participants offered a global petition calling on rich world leaders to cancel the debts of poor countries. Around 22 million people in sixty countries signed the petition. Also, celebrities like Bono Vox and Muhammad Ali were involved in this movement.
- 7 The Jubilee Centre, UK is a Christian organisation that offers biblical perspectives on issues relevant to the community, mainly regarding social reform. For them, the Bible describes a social agenda that is of benefit to the general public. See more in: <http://www.jubilee-centre.org> (access May 20, 2013). Here are just some examples of various organisation around the world with a biblical Jubilee mission: Action Aid, Allia—The Social Profit Society, Christian Aid, Christian Socialist Movement, Credit Action, Drop the Debt, Health Poverty Action, Jubilee Campaign, Jubilee Scotland, Jubilee USA Network, Keep Sunday Special, Methodist Relief and Development Fund, National Justice and Peace Network, One, Relationships Global, The Relationships Foundation, Rolling Jubilee, Speak, Strike Debt, Tzedek, Unison, War on Want, World Development Movement.

Jubilee continues to exercise a powerful influence on the religious thoughts and actions of God's people.

This naturally raises questions about the origins, purpose, history, as well as the biblical-theological meaning and significance of the institution of the biblical Jubilee and its appropriate implication in today's world. The most frequently asked question is whether the Jubilee was in reality observed in ancient Israel. Unfortunately, the biblical and the archaeological data are not able to give us a concrete answer to this question. It is obvious that the reinterpretation of the biblical message of Jubilee stands in a long tradition of its adaptability in the course of the history of Israel and the time of Jesus' public ministry, as the religious communities developed and changed.

Regarding the overview of scholarship, there have been a few articles⁸ and books on this important subject regarding the Old Testament message of Jubilee.⁹ Recent work on the subject deals with the history of the process of reinter-

8 E.g. VanderKam, "Sabbatical Chronologies in the Dead Scrolls and Related Literature", is primarily focused on the chronological uses of the Jubilee. He examines the texts of Exod 23:10–11; Deut 15 and Lev 25 and traces the use of Sabbath and Jubilee for chronological purposes through the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, the Pre-Qumran writings, and the Qumran literature (VanderKam 2000, 159–178).

9 In the last sixty-nine years there have been four scholarly books dealing with Lev 25 and the theme of Jubilee. North, *Sociology of the Biblical Jubilee* (1954) and *The Biblical Jubilee ... after Fifty Years* (2000). North's second book is more about how the new work has changed or confirmed his earlier insights. North provides a broad bibliography of scholarship dedicated to the message of Jubilee. For North, the Jubilee legislation was a very old legislation established immediately after the Israelite settlement of Canaan. However, in his second book he sees the Jubilee legislation as a product of the late exile time. Fager, *Land Tenure and the Biblical Jubilee* (1993) argues that Lev 25 was established in the late exilic time by the priests who wanted to return the property to the people. For him, the legislation of Lev 25 was a product based on earlier legislations. His investigation of the relationship of Lev 25 with Ezek 40–48 reveals their common tradition. Lefebvre, *Le jubilé biblique: Lv 25, exégèse et théologie* (2003) brings a philological-exegetical work of Lev 25. He argues the issue of the forty-nine or fifty-year Jubilee legislation and if there is any evidence whether the Jubilee was ever practiced. He argues that the Jubilee legislation was established in the Persian period. The texts about the slave laws in Exod 21 and Deut 15 are much older than Lev 25. Also, Milgrom's investigation of the theme of Jubilee in his commentary *Leviticus 23–27* is an important contribution to Jubilee scholarship (2001). Milgrom dates Lev 25 and the Jubilee legislation to around the eighth century B.C.E. He argues that the Jubilee legislation was a priestly response to the problem of society caused by the growth of the monarchy and a trade-based economy. For him, the text of Lev 25 is coherent, consisting of legislation governing the declining stages of impoverishment of an Israelite land-owner. The year of Jubilee was an earnest legislation, based on some historical practice. Furthermore, regarding the works on the implementation of the

pretation of the Jubilee.¹⁰ However, the New Testament use of Jubilee tradition has been broadly examined by scholars.¹¹

On the one hand, most of the literature has focused entirely on the historical data of the Jubilee legislation without mentioning its practical implications for the situations of today's world. On the other hand, however, some authors¹² have focused on the direct application of Jubilee principles to the modern socio-economic contexts of today, but they have lacked careful exegetical analysis. The last mentioned group has understood our present time as a unique opportunity for the Church to renew its spirituality and its mission to the world by rediscovering the radically different vision of the socio-economic practice that is found at the heart of the Bible, which is the message of Jubilee. They are primarily interested in the practical implication of the message of Jubilee. Their

Jubilee in Is 61 we should also mention, for example, Zimmerli, "Das Gnadenjahr des Herrn" (1970) and Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66* (1998). Zimmerli dates Is 61 in the early post-exilic time. Is 61 contains the expectation of the Jubilee year in Lev 25 with the concept of a messianic redeemer. This is the re-application of the Jubilee tradition because the socio-economic particularity of the forgiveness of financial debt and the return of property is generalised in the phrases 'comfort for mourners' and 'freedom for captives' for the disheartened exiles. Zimmerli suggests that Ezekiel's vision of restoration (Ezek 40:1 ff.) was half-way through a Jubilee cycle. Also, for him, Ezek 46:17 can be proof that Ezekiel knew Lev 25 and its early stage of the Jubilee law. Sommer sees Is 61:1–4 as a re-application of the Jubilee law from the individual Israelite debtor to the nation as a whole.

- 10 See Bergsma (2007). The book *The Jubilee from Leviticus to Qumran* is a revision of his doctoral dissertation defended in 2004. Bergsma makes the review of the history of the process of reinterpretation of the Jubilee. His survey includes the roots of the Jubilee year in Ancient Near Eastern law and practice, in the various uses in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, Second Temple literature and Qumran writings. The author examines the principal sources of the Jubilee passages, to seventy weeks or to land tenure in general. It is obvious that his explanation of seventy weeks and land tenure very often does not have any connection with the institution of Jubilee. Also, his argument that Lev 25 preceded all other texts on the Jubilee produces some problems, which will be examined in this study.
- 11 Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (1972/1994); Trocmé, *Jesus and the Nonviolent Revolution* (1973/2007); Sloan, *The Favourable Year of the Lord: A Study of Jubilarly Theology in the Gospel of Luke* (1977); Blosser, "Jesus and the Jubilee (Luke 4:16–30): The Year of Jubilee and Its Significance in the Gospel of Luke" (1979); Ringe, *The Jubilee Proclamation in the Ministry and Teaching of Jesus: A Traditional-Critical Study in the Synoptic Gospel and Acts* (1981); Jesus, *Liberation and the Biblical Jubilee: Images for Ethics and Christology* (1985/2004); Schreck "The Nazareth Pericope: Lk 4, 16–30 in Recent Study" (1989); Prior, *Jesus the Liberator: Nazareth Liberation Theology (Luke 4:26–30)*, (1995).
- 12 E.g. Harris (1996); Kinsler and Kinsler (1999); Mihevc (1999).

intention is to call the faithful followers of Christ to nurture commitment and creativity by promoting the Jubilee message, a spirituality of forgiveness and reparation, and practical renewal of individuals and communities.

A gap can be recognised between the scholarly work on the subject and the actual practical teaching and implications based on the message of Jubilee of various Christian organisations and writers. This study will try to bridge this gap by using the synthesis of our exegetical analysis of the biblical texts on Jubilee and Moltmann's interpretation of the subject. This synthesis will try to propose a deeper understanding and a new vision of the message.

This study will analyse and combine the Old Testament teaching on the subject with the New Testament's concept of 'the year of God's favour'. It will examine their similarities and differences. The methods of approaching the reading of the biblical texts are the historical-critical and theological. The approach of this study will be to use the biblical-critical methodologies that seem most appropriate and helpful for explaining the particular biblical texts on Jubilee. However, in the fifth chapter, a hermeneutical code of reading and interpreting the message of Jubilee using Moltmann's discourse of the subject will be used in order to apply the biblical message of Jubilee in today's world. This study will analyse how the biblical texts of Lev 25; Is 61 and Lk 4 are interpreted in Moltmann's theology and how Moltmann understands these biblical texts that refer to the message of Jubilee. Furthermore, it will be necessary to investigate his teaching on the Sabbath in order to discover his understanding of the Jubilee because these two themes are closely connected in his discourse.

Therefore, this dissertation will not deal with Moltmann's complete theological work but only with one segment of it that is connected with the theme of Jubilee. It is not a comparative study between Moltmann's systematic theology and, for example, the book of Leviticus or the Gospel of Luke. The study is primarily a biblical-theological work. It brings a new hermeneutical reading of the biblical Jubilee with the help of Moltmann's code and this code is Moltmann's concept of the social doctrine of the Trinity (Moltmann 1981; 1985; 1992).¹³ The concept of the social doctrine of the Trinity will be used in this study in order to reveal the meaning of the true freedom of the Jubilee.

The main aim of this study is to build on work already done but to take it one step further by using the intertextual analysis¹⁴ of the message of Jubilee

13 See e.g. Volf (1998); Kilby (2000); McDougall (2005); Sorč (2007).

14 Intertextuality was thoroughly researched by Julia Kristeva and presented in her groundbreaking work in the 1960s. Kristeva speaks about the structuring of text where she defines

in Lev 25; Is 61 and Lk 4 and Moltmann's discourse on the subject. In this study, the intertextual analysis means that the biblical meaning of Jubilee is intertwined and accompanied by Moltmann's teaching on the subject. Accordingly, this analysis will help us to propose the significance and implication of the biblical Jubilee.¹⁵ So, this kind of intertextual analysis of our biblical-theological interpretation will help us to re-connect closely the biblical message of Jubilee with its actual implications and suggested realisations in the contemporary world.

This study is made up of five main chapters. The first four chapters include the exegesis of the theme of Jubilee in Lev 25; Is 61 and Lk 4. Also, this presentation of Jubilee includes some other Jubilee connections with the themes of the Sabbath and the Sabbath year in Exod 21:1–6, 7–11; 23:10–12; Deut 15:1–18; Is 58:1–14. The biblical theme of Jubilee will be interpreted with the themes of Sabbath and Sabbath year in the laws of the Pentateuch. These laws are the Decalogue, the Book of the Covenant, the Deuteronomic laws, the Priestly Code and the Holiness Code.

The first part of the first chapter will attempt to find an answer to the question of what the theme of the Sabbath is in the Pentateuchal laws and what is its connection with the theme of Jubilee and the Sabbath year. This chapter will deal with the historical layout of the source criticism in order to discover connections between the traditions of CC, D, P, and H in the Pentateuch regarding

'text' as 'productivity'. Permutation of texts, intertextuality comes from different texts which are intertwined and when one text neutralises and opens another text. "The term *intertextuality* denotes this transposition of one (or several) sign-system(s) into another ..." (Kristeva 1986, 37, 111).

- 15 One of the main objections to intertextuality is its endless postponing of the meaning of the text, i.e. the meaning of the text is 'floating' in infinity. However, in the theological intertextual discourse, God is the guarantor of the original and concrete meaning that a reader is looking for. This investigation is based on the theological fact that God is the Creator of the biblical writer and its reader. Both of them depend on the original Author and they participate in the life of the Author with the help of that Author. God's *logos* gives the possibility to participate in God. This kind of participation has a dialogical nature (*dia-logos*) because with this *logos* it is possible to come to the *logos*. Intertextual reading focuses on the incarnate *logos* because the incarnation is the new language, the new system of signs, which interprets all other signs. In the Gospels, Jesus calls himself a sign (a sign of Jonah) and invites us to interpret the signs of the times. This incarnate *logos* is an assumption of intertextuality. This kind of intertextuality does not postpone the meaning of the text in infinity but invites for an action to constitute a new community and redefine reality. This means that action, community and reality are intertwined and combined in their participation in the *logos*. See Milbank (1996, 137, 157); Ward (2000, 5).

the H's concept of the Sabbath of the land. Then, this concept of the Sabbath of the land in H will show whether there is any connection between the Sabbath day, the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee in the Pentateuch.

Furthermore, the first chapter will analyse the social and cultural connection between the laws of CC (Exod 21:1–6, 7–11; 23:10–12), D (Deut 15:1–18) and H (Lev 25:1–7) regarding the Sabbath/Seventh year. Also, it will bring an overview of the laws concerning slavery and bonded or hired labour in CC (Exod 21:2–6), D (Deut 15:12–18) and H (Lev 25:39–43, 47–55), showing the connection between these legislations. This examination will help us discover what the legislations regarding slavery and bonded workers mean in the Pentateuch, especially in connection with the Sabbath, the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee.

The second part of the first chapter will try to discover the origins, purpose, history, meaning and significance of the themes of the Sabbath day, the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee in Lev 25. A brief survey of the main scholars regarding the dating of H and Lev 25, the exegetical interpretation and the composition of structure of Lev 25 will bring a conclusion regarding the meaning and dating of the legislation of Jubilee year in Lev 25. The intention of this study is to discover where this institution was known and from which background.

The next chapter will present the exegetical interpretation of the prophetic messages of the Sabbath day and the year of God's favour in Is 58¹⁶ and Is 61. The exegesis of Is 58 will discover the structure 'if-then' and its meaning in that text. The main aim is to discover the meaning of socio-economic justice and the Sabbath day with respect to the right relationships between the people and God in Is 58. Also, this chapter will try to distinguish what it means to be an authentic, religious community. Scholars do not agree concerning the date and setting of Is 58 and Is 61. Thus, this study will deal with the issues of the date and setting in order to discover the proper meaning and significance of the message of Jubilee.

The second part of this chapter will give a short overview regarding the determination of the anointed person in Is 61 and will conclude who that person is. This study will deal with the issue of exile and its connection with debt-slavery, return and restoration. Also, the year of God's favour in Is 61 will be examined in its connection with the year of Jubilee in Lev 25 and the usage of the Hebrew word *יְרוּר*. After a short analysis of the most important similarities between the message of Lev 25; Is 58 and Is 61, the third chapter summarises the message of the Jubilee legislation in Lev 25 in correlation with the prophetic Jubilee message in Is 58 and Is 61. Also, it will be discovered how the

16 About Is 58 as the Jubilee background see also Hanks (1983); Fishbane (1985).

images of exodus, exile and freedom are linked to the theme of socio-economic justice in Lev 25; Is 58 and Is 61.

The fourth chapter will give an exegetical overview of the theme of Sabbath in the Gospel of Luke (Lk 4:16–30; 4:31–37; 6:1–5, 6–11; 13:10–17; 14:1–6). This examination will try to discover the main intention of Jesus' teaching regarding the Sabbath and its relationship with the message of Jubilee. This chapter will examine the Old Testament Jubilee rules, such as the redistribution of wealth, the cancellation of debts, the rest of the land and the release of slaves in the Gospel of Luke and make conclusion regarding the message of Jubilee.

This chapter will also give a detailed exegesis of Lk 4:16–21 and the structure of Jesus' reading of the scroll. The rhetorical and structural criticism of Lk 4:16–21 will disclose a specific rhetorical form and the climax of the text that will reveal the proper meaning and significance of the theme of God's year of favour and its connections with Is 58:6 and Is 61:1–3. It will be concluded whether the message of Lk 4:16–21 deals with the year of Jubilee in the same way as it is presented in the legal passages of the Pentateuch. The textual analysis of Lk 4:16–21 reveals Jesus' inauguration of his public ministry, with a focus on his use of the traditional message of Jubilee. This chapter will try to discover the purpose, history, meaning and significance of the year of God's favour in Lk 4 and establish who the main recipients of Jesus' message of the year of God's favour were.

The aim is to determine whether Is 61 and Lk 4 make direct or indirect reference to the Jubilee institution (Lev 25:8–55) and how these texts should be understood and interpreted. This study will analyse the message of Jubilee through its various uses in Lev 25; Is 61 and Lk 4 as legal, socio-economic, prophetic, messianic, and eschatological concepts of the Jubilee message.

The fifth chapter will combine the themes of Sabbath and Jubilee in Moltmann's theology. The chapter will reveal how the biblical passages of Lev 25; Is 61 and Lk 4 have made an impact on Moltmann's understanding of the biblical message of Sabbath/Jubilee. This study will include Moltmann's interpretation of the Sabbath in connection with such themes as: the Sabbath commandment, the Sabbath and God's ecology, the Sabbath as a crown of creation, the Sabbath as a holy time, the Sabbath and the concept of redemption, and the message of Sabbath and *Shekkinah*. After that, it will be shown how Moltmann interprets the year of Jubilee in Lev 25 and Is 61 and how it is connected with Jesus' public ministry in Lk 4:18 ff. Also, the relationship between Lev 25:10 ff.; Is 61:1 ff. and Lk 4:18 ff. in Moltmann's writings will be revealed.

Finally, Moltmann's explanation of vicious circles of death will be viewed parallel to the previously mentioned problems of today's world, poverty, modern-day slavery, and the financial global crisis in order to offer a construc-

tive alternative to these problems through the biblical-theological proposal of Jubilee. This study will offer some solutions to these problems and give new insights into the implementation of the biblical Jubilee in Moltmann's theology through his concept of the social doctrine of the Trinity and will propose some ideas for socio-economic, political and ecological reform. As already mentioned, the message of Jubilee is a symbol of spiritual and material freedom and has motivated efforts to accomplish it. Moltmann's definition of the theme of freedom as a solidarity and free community will be put in close correlation with the concept of the freedom of the biblical Jubilee in order to reveal something new and authentic.

The Sabbath Day, the Sabbath Year and the Year of Jubilee in the Laws of Pentateuch

This chapter examines the themes of the Sabbath day and the seventh year in the laws of Pentateuch. The theme of the seventh year in the laws of Pentateuch includes the exegetical analysis of Lev 25:1–7; Exod 21:1–6, 7–11; 23:10–12 and Deut 15:1–18. After that, this study discovers the relations between the legislations concerning slavery, bonded and hired workers in the Book of the Covenant, the Deuteronomic laws and the Holiness Code. Furthermore, the second part of this chapter deals specifically with the Holiness Code, Lev 25 and its message of the Jubilee. The composition of the structure and exegetical interpretation of Lev 25 discloses the meaning of the year of Jubilee in Lev 25, which will lead us toward the second chapter and its message of the Sabbath day and the year of the Lord's favour in the book of Isaiah 58 and 61.

1 The Sabbath in the Laws of Pentateuch

The theme of Sabbath¹ is very important for the laws of Pentateuch.² These laws are the Decalogue, the Book of the Covenant, the Deuteronomic laws, the Priestly Source and the Holiness Code. The Sabbath day is a seventh day of the week, i.e. a holy day, which is set apart from ordinary working days.³ The Hebrew noun שַׁבָּת is derived from a verbal form שָׁבַת meaning 'cease from work, to rest'.

The pre-exilic observance of the Sabbath day was associated with the celebration of the new moon.⁴ The Hebrew term for the new moon is חֹדֶשׁ. There are several biblical verses that speak about the Sabbath day and the new moon. For example, the new moon is mentioned in 1Sam 20:5ff.; 2Kgs 4:23; Ps 81:3;

1 There is no scholarly consensus on the historical origin of the institution of the Sabbath. See Andreassen (1972); Haag (2004, 381–396).

2 See e.g. Dressler (1982, 21–42); Bacchiocchi (1991, 69–89); Dawn (1991, 176–192); Goldenberg (1991, 31–43); Meier (1991, 3–11); Wurzbürger (1991, 139–147); Lowery (2000, 3–122).

3 About the Sabbath day and other appointed festivals in the biblical texts see Weyde (2004).

4 E.g. McKay (1991, 12–27); Grabbe (1993, 86–88).

Is 1:13; Am 8:5ff. Deut 16:1 speaks about the whole month of Abib or the new moon. However, in the pre-exilic period the regular week was not divided and established according to the course of the moon but according to the Lord's command (Tidball 2005, 271). Basically, at that time the Sabbath day was a day of rest for all human beings. Through their rest they gave honour and respect to the Lord (Soggin 2001, 137).

During the postexilic time, the Sabbath day was very important for the identity of the Israelites.⁵ The Hebrew Bible mostly connects observance of the seventh-day with the exilic or postexilic period (Lowery 2000, 4). At that time the priests considered the Sabbath day as the one of the main institutions through which the Israelites keep their faith in God, the Creator of the world.

It is difficult to find the origin of the Sabbath day⁶ (Soggin 2001, 138). However, the Sabbath day, which was connected with God's people, was exceptional in the ancient world.⁷ Thus, we may agree with Jensen's words:

Natural rhythms, such as the day, the lunar month and the agricultural year determined many of the rituals of the cult. In Israel, as in other nations, important points in the cycles (e.g. harvest and new moon) marked the passage of significant units of time, and were celebrated by popular festival. In addition to this general calendrical system, a second type of time reckoning existed in Israel which has not been found in the same form elsewhere in the ancient world. It comprised the regular seven-day cycle of the week, culminating in the Sabbath or the seventh day. This was independent of any natural cycle, and the Sabbatical principle affected the way in which the festivals were celebrated to a remarkable degree.

JENSON 1992, 182

5 Postexilic biblical literature shows significant concern regarding the Sabbath. In the fifth century B.C.E., Nehemiah underlines the necessity for observance of the Sabbath in rebuilt Jerusalem. In the book of Leviticus the significance of the Sabbath is most prominent (Levine 1989, 232–233).

6 Grabbe underlines that it was common to regard the Sabbath as an exilic or post-exilic innovation because its observance can be found mainly in exilic or post-exilic texts (such as Is 56; Neh 13:15–22 etc.). Lev 23:3 is a later insertion to the original list of Lev 23 (Grabbe 1993, 87–88).

7 The loose connection between the Babylonian *šapattu* (a festival of the full moon) and the Sabbath cannot give a clear explanation regarding the lunar calendar and the Sabbath. See Childs (1974, 414).

Here is the summary of the Sabbath's characteristics and observance in the Pentateuch:

- a) Sabbath as a sign of God's sanctification of his people (Exod 31:13 (P); 31:17 (P)).
- b) Sabbath's holiness (Gen 2:2–3 (P); Exod 20:8–11 (Decalogue); 35:2a (P); Deut 5:12 (Decalogue)).
- c) Sabbath is established at the creation that was connected with the rest on that day (Gen 2:2–3 (P); Exod 20:8–11 (Decalogue); 31:16–17 (P)).
- d) Sabbath as a seven-day work abstention (Exod 20:8–11 (Decalogue); 23:10–12 (CC); 31:12–17 (P); Lev 23:3 (H), 7–8 (H); Deut 5:12–17 (Decalogue)).
- e) Penalty for violating the Sabbath day (Exod 31:15; 35:2–3 (P)).
- f) Sabbath as a remembrance of God's deliverance from Egypt (Deut 5:15 (Decalogue)).
- g) Sabbath as an eternal, perpetual covenant (Exod 31:16–17 (P); Lev 24:8 (H)).
- h) Sabbath's humanitarian purpose (Exod 23:12 (CC); Deut 5:12–15 (Decalogue)).
- i) Economics of Sabbath refer to God's abundance and provision (Exod 16:4–5 (J/E); 16:25–26 (J/E)).
- j) Sabbath day and offerings to God (Num 28:10 (P); Lev 24:1–9 (H)).
- k) Sabbath and reverence toward sanctuary (Lev 19:30; 26:2 (H)) or parents (Lev 19:3 (H)).
- l) Sabbath of the land (Lev 25:2, 4 (H)).

1.1 *The Sabbath in the Decalogue and the Book of the Covenant*⁸

Keeping the Sabbath in the Decalogue (cf. Exod 20:8–11; Deut 5:12–15)⁹ is the only law that is connected with sacred time. The Sabbath day is a holy day. The Decalogue in Exodus is concerned with the Sabbath and God as the Creator of the world who blessed and consecrated the Sabbath day and rested on that day (Exod 20:8–11).

8 The Book of the Covenant includes Exod 20:22–23:33. It is a collection of rules that Moses is said to have received from the Lord. CC is introduced as 'judgments', i.e. 'laws', 'rules' or 'ordinances' that Moses set before the people (Exod 20:22; 21:1; 24:3). Contrarily to CC, the Decalogue is presented as direct words of God (Exod 20:1) (Baker 2009, 8).

9 Keeping the Sabbath day is the only commandment that is not commended in the New Testament. Probably, one of the reasons for that was the Jewish wrong understanding of the Sabbath in the time of Jesus Christ. See Tidball (2005, 272).

... the major thrust of the command falls on the verb 'to hallow'. The piel form is a factitive use having the connotation 'to make holy'. The command to hallow is not identified simply with no working or resting, but over and above both of these is the positive action of making holy. It presupposes the cessation of the normal activity of work in order to set aside the Sabbath for something special. The nature of the special quality is not spelled out, but briefly characterised in the phrase: 'the Sabbath belongs to the Lord your God'. Again, the Sabbath command is tied to the act of creation. Indeed v. 11 provides an etiology for the sanctification of the Sabbath, which was rooted in the creation tradition. The etiology grounds the sanctity of the Sabbath in the creative act of God; it is built into the very structure of the universe.

CHILDS 1974, 415–416

It is obvious that v. 11 is dependent on the Priestly creation tradition in Gen 1. The Priestly source¹⁰ underlines that the Sabbath rest is connected with the celebration of God's rest on the seventh day when his work of creation was completed. God's people need to rest in him because he did everything important for the wellbeing of his creation (Cairns 1992, 75). Keeping the Sabbath day means awareness that God created the world. Therefore, every seventh day all creation shall return to God and his rest (Gen 2:2–3), i.e. to the original and divine order. People and animals are an integral part of God's creation. So, they shall return through the cyclic sacred time to their rest. They are obliged to do what God has already done in his creation. Six days they shall work but on the Sabbath day they shall rest.

Deuteronomy says that no work is to be done on Sabbath 'in order that your servant ... may rest as well as you' (Deut 5:14). We may also find social aspects of the Sabbath in Exod 23:12 (Childs 1974, 417).

10 Knohl concludes that P in the Pentateuch contains some first parts of Exodus; Exod 25–31; 35–40; Lev 1–16; several passages in Genesis and in Numbers (Knohl 2007, 2, 163).

1.2 *The Sabbath in the Deuteronomic Laws*¹¹

Deuteronomy connects the Sabbath day with freedom from slavery: “Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.” (Deut 5:15). The Sabbath observance is connected with the remembrance of Egypt and the event of exodus. During the period of slavery in Egypt, rest was not allowed for the slaves. The Sabbath rest is a reminder of the new status of freed slaves and the Lord’s deliverance from slavery. Theology of memory is underlined here, i.e. memory of the slavery and deliverance. Through their own experience of slavery and thanksgiving for deliverance, God’s people need to be compassionate toward the needy and the poor in their own society. Also, all society needs to enjoy and participate in a weekly rest. Rest on the Sabbath day includes the Israelites, domestic animals, slaves and resident aliens, which means that the institution of Sabbath has a mainly humanitarian purpose. Humanitarian, yet note that Sabbath days are equally significant for all God’s living beings.

As already mentioned, the Decalogue in Deut 5 connects the Sabbath day with freedom from slavery and with the remembrance of the exodus from Egypt. In the section of Deut 14:22–16:17 this sentence ‘remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt’ sounds as a refrain (15:15; 16:12) (Biddle 2003, 250). The release law in Deut 15 is connected with the Sabbath commandment and its reference to the number seven, release from work and servitude, and through the repetition of the phrase ‘remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt’. This reveals its humanitarian purpose. That means if the Israelites will remember Egypt they will also understand and accept the humanitarian rules given at Horeb (Schwartz 2007, 9).

The Sabbath rules in Deut 14:22–16:17 speaks about rest, freedom and celebration. Work and rest are interrelated. If people observe the Lord’s command-

11 Wellhausen underlined that the central section of Deuteronomy, 12–26 chapters, was written in Josiah’s time and then provided with 1–11; 27–34 chapters in the exile (Wellhausen 2001; also Driver 1902). The extent of this collection (Deut 12–26) is commonly accepted. Also, the identification of the Deuteronomic Laws with the book discovered in 622 B.C.E. during the reign of Josiah, which became the legal basis for the king Josiah reform, is widely accepted. However, e.g., Alt argued that the book was originated in Samaria before the time of Josiah (Alt 1953). Noth suggested that a Josianic Deuteronomy was revised and expanded by an exilic author encompassing the canonical books Deuteronomy through 2 Kgs (Noth 1981). Also, von Rad proposed that the Levites brought an early form of Deuteronomy with them to Judah after the Assyrian conquest (von Rad 1953).

ments then their work will be blessed (14:29; 15:6, 10; 16:15), i.e. if they work during the week and rest during the Sabbath day they will participate in the rhythms of life (Biddle 2003, 249–251). D, like CC, connects rest with the created order and the rhythm of work and rest in human life.

1.3 *The Sabbath in the Holiness Code*

H¹² engages the Sabbath laws and the seventh-year laws of CC, D and P. The Priestly Sabbath in Gen 2:2–3; Exod 31:12–17 and 35:2–3 does not have a humanitarian purpose like the Sabbath laws in Exod 23:12 and Deut 5:12–15. Exod 31:12 ff. speaks about the Sabbath as a sign of the eternal covenant. The sign of the covenant is a reminder of the relationship between the Lord and his people. Their covenantal relationship is the main goal of creation (Childs 1974, 416). Keeping the Sabbath day is important for the awareness of the Israelites of the source of their holiness, which is the Lord alone (Exod 31:13). The penalty for violating the holy day of Sabbath is death¹³ (Exod 31:15; 35:2–3). Keeping the Sabbath day is connected with sanctity. In the one hand, keeping the Sabbath is necessary for achieving holiness but on the other hand, violating the Sabbath means defilement for the Israelites.

Beside the ritual rules in P, which are important for the sanctity of people, H adds to that some ethical rules.¹⁴ Moreover, H interprets and modulates these

12 In the 19th century Wellhausen and Delitzsch recognised the distinct character of the laws in Lev 17–26. In 1877 that part of the Scripture was given the name ‘the Holiness Code’ by Klostermann. H is a part of the Priestly literature composed of Leviticus and other Pentateuch texts. Some of the main and noticeable characteristics of H are its terminology and style. For example, frequent mentions of the term holy (*qados*) and the Lord’s statement ‘I am the Lord your God’ are specific to H (Baker 2009, 9). The term ‘Holiness Code’ is a common name but Hebrew-language scholars mostly use the term ‘Holiness School’. H includes Lev 17–26 (27). It has uniqueness in style, language, belief and legal concerns (Knohl 2007, 2, 6).

13 It is not possible to find evidence that a death penalty for violating the Sabbath day was ever applied. See e.g. Soggin (2001, 141).

14 At the core of priestly theology is the conviction that God dwells in the midst of the Israelite community. The holiness in the book of Leviticus is associated with God, with the tabernacle/holy space, and with the community (especially chs. 17–26). God made the Sabbath day holy (Gen 2:3) but God also calls his people to make the Sabbath day holy (Lev 23:3); God says that his presence makes the space of meeting holy (cf. Exod 29:43). He is the one who makes the people holy (cf. Exod 19:6), but, at the same time, he insists that the community enact holiness in order to actualise it (Lev 19:2; 20:7). God invites his people to be holy, in the same way that God is holy. For that he gives them the instructions for how this is to be accomplished. These instructions focus on socio-economic relations

sources according to the relationship among God, the land and the Israelites. Through that relationship H also presents a new concept of the Sabbath, i.e. the Sabbath of the land (Lev 25:2; 26:34–35). This is a new observance and a new characteristic of the Sabbath. Therefore, H adds a new feature to the old notions of Sabbath in the Pentateuch.

H speaks about the sacred cyclical time based on the Sabbath. Certainly, the Sabbath is a central feature of the perception of time in Israel. The Sabbath is connected with the reckoning of time, i.e. it is a sign of the sacred order of life and is a basic regulation of the week. Thereby, H mentions three cyclical legislations such as the Jubilee law based on a fifty-year cycle, the Sabbatical laws based on a seven-year cycle, and the Sabbath that is connected with a seven-day cycle. The seventh year is connected with the Sabbath and the Jubilee regulations and all of them comprise a sacred cyclical time.¹⁵ During the Sabbatical year (Lev 25:1–7) and the Jubilee year (Lev 25:8–55) no work or productivity shall be done. The land needs to have its Sabbaths in order to be fruitful and that the people have a secured life on the land. The rule ‘not to work’ underlines that the Lord is the source of blessing and security for the earth and his people.

The sacred cyclical time based on the Sabbath day is connected with the sanctity of God’s people and his land. Holiness, which is connected with the observance of the Sabbath, has temporal and spatial aspects too (Milgrom 2004, 243). H, according to Knohl, underlines the sanctity of the Sabbath, which has the same importance as the sanctuary. The Sabbath as a ‘temple in time’ reflects the holiness of Israelites. The laity who keep the Sabbath days are like priests in the temple. The practice of separation is possible in space and time. The holy day of Sabbath was set apart from the other days of the week in the same way as the sanctuary was set apart from the profane world.

Furthermore, in Lev 19:3, 30 and 26:2 keeping the Sabbath day is connected with reverence toward the sanctuary and parents. Reverence for the Lord’s sanctuary and keeping the Lord’s Sabbaths reflect the relationship between the Israelites and the Lord. Rules regarding the filial respect of each person in society and observance of the Sabbath day mirror the life in society and

as well. Most important is that the invitation for holiness is a call to imitate God (Gorman 1997, 10–14).

15 For the Israelites a rhythm of their worshipping was important, such as the weekly Sabbath, the annual festivals (e.g. Exod 34:22–23; Deut 16:1–17), the annual Day of Atonement (Lev 16), the seventh year (Exod 23:10–11; Lev 25:3–7; Deut 15:1–6), the Jubilee year (Lev 25:8–55). All of these holy occasions were observed as a way of serving the Lord (Wright 2004, 296).

relationship between people. Through the faithful observance of the Sabbath, reverence of his sanctuary and his community, the Lord will sanctify his people.

Stackert correctly says that H underlines a close connection between keeping the Sabbath and the holiness of people.

H builds upon P's notion of Sabbath by designating its observance a key component of Israelite holiness (Lev 19:3, 30)—a holiness that is achieved through obedience to the commandments. Such an extension of holiness to laypersons is wholly unconsidered in P. This association between Sabbath observance and lay holiness also imparts to Sabbath observance a positive/performative element that is quite innovative vis-à-vis P's Sabbath, for P's Sabbath is characterised negatively (not working). H's introduction of lay holiness into pentateuchal Priestly thought also accords well with its explicit claim that the Israelites are owned by the deity (Lev 25:42, 55), a characteristic that makes them eligible for sanctity.

STACKERT 2011, 2, 8–9

For H, the attainment of holiness is the one of main goals for the Israelites. Their holiness separates them from the other nations. The concept of holiness is combined with the observance of the Sabbath and other holy festivals and occasions (cf. Lev 23) but also with morality and social justice (Knohl 2007, 198). The list of the appointed holy festivals in Lev 23 begins with the Sabbath day. It is most likely that the inclusion of the keeping of the Sabbath day in Lev 23 would be in order to show a pattern for the people's faithful observance of the other festivals. Hence, some of the festivals need to be observed in the same way as a Sabbath day (Harrison 1980, 372).

Connection of the seventh year with the Sabbath day in Lev 25:4 is described as a *שַׁבָּת שְׁבִתוֹן*¹⁶ 'Sabbath of complete rest'. The Sabbath day is some kind of the conceptual model for the institutions of Sabbatical and Jubilee, which is different than older descriptions of the seventh year in Exod 21; 23 and Deut 15 (Lowery 2000, 5). Like the humanitarian concern of the Sabbath day in Exod 23:12 and Deut 5:12–14, H introduces also humanitarian concept but in its seventh year legislation. The reflection of Sabbath can be seen in the proclamation of freedom to the indebted people too.¹⁷ In H, even though the land ceases from its labour, people and animals are those who have the benefits from it.

¹⁶ See e.g. Timmer (2009, 47–50).

¹⁷ See e.g. Harris (1996, 26–34).

1.4 *Conclusion on the Sabbath in the Laws of Pentateuch*

The most important Sabbath concern in Deut 5:12–15 and Exod 23:12 is humanitarian. In both chapters the Sabbath is connected with compassion towards the exploited, the oppressed and the impoverished people in Israel. The Sabbath day in Deuteronomy contains the significance of memory about the slavery in Egypt and delight of abundant freedom. Deut 5:15 underlines the importance of remembering that the people were slaves in Egypt and that through the deliverance from Egypt the Lord commanded to keep the Sabbath day. In this case D, like CC, underlines the importance of rejoicing in keeping the rhythm of work and joyful rest in human life. Also, it is a joyful celebration of freedom from oppression and the Lord's blessing. When people's work cooperates with the Lord's purpose then that work becomes holy and prepares the way for the period of rest.

Contrarily to the Sabbath laws in Exod 23:12 and Deut 5:12–15, the Priestly Sabbath in Gen 2:2–3; Exod 31:12–17 and 35:2–3 does not underline humanitarian concern. The Priestly Sabbath is connected with sanctity. "The holiness of Sabbath preceded the holiness of Israel. Even if people fail to observe the Sabbath, it remains holy." (Heschel 1951, 14). The Decalogue in Exod 20:8ff. speaks about the importance of keeping the Sabbath day, which is hallowed by the Lord, who is the Creator of the world. The Priestly concern (cf. Gen 2:2–3) for keeping the Sabbath day is connected with the rest of the Lord in creation. The main meaning of keeping the Sabbath is awareness of the Lord who is the Creator of the world, return to his rest and his original, divine order. Observing the Sabbath brings holiness while violation of the Sabbath brings defilement for the Israelites.

H interprets and uses the older traditions of CC, D and P in the Pentateuch. For example, P brings the ritual rules, which are important for the sanctity of people, but H adds to that some ethical norms. Certainly H interprets and modulates the older sources according the relationship among God, the Israelites and the land. As a real innovator, H speaks about a new concept of Sabbath of the land and about the sacred cyclical time based on the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a main feature of the perception of time in Israel. It is a mark of the sacred order of life and is a basic regulation of the week.

Accordingly, H speaks about three main cyclical legislations based on the Sabbath that are connected with a seven-day cycle. The first one is connected to a seven-year cycle. The other two legislations are the Sabbatical laws based on a seven-year cycle and the Jubilee legislation based on a fifty-year cycle, seven weeks of years, seven times seven years so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty nine years. Then the trumpet sounds throughout the land on the fiftieth year, which is a Jubilee, a holy year (Lev 25:8–12). The Sabbath is

connected with the Sabbatical year and the Jubilee legislations and they make up a sacred cyclical time. In a sacred cyclical time no work or productivity shall be done. The Sabbath day is a conceptual model for the legislations of Sabbatical and Jubilee, which is not the same as the older institutions of the seventh year described in Exod 21; 23 and Deut 15. Like the humanitarian purpose of the Sabbath in Exod 23:12 and Deut 5:12–14, H speaks also about that humanitarian concern but in its seventh year legislation.

The decree ‘not to work’ implies that the Lord is a provider of security and blessings for his people. The land shall cease from its labour. In addition, keeping the Sabbath, reverence of the Lord’s sanctuary and his community in H is connected with the sanctity of people and the land. The concept of holiness in H, which is extended to laypersons too, is combined with keeping of the Sabbath and other festivals (cf. Lev 23) and performing socio-economic justice. The Sabbath day reflects the ethical system of the Israelites and “means desisting from the frantic pursuit of securing the world on our own terms.” (Brueggemann 1989, 95). The cessation of all activities during the sacred cyclical times has an influence on religious and socio-economic levels in a society.

2 The Seventh Year in the Laws of Pentateuch

The main topic of this chapter is the fallow year/seventh year/Sabbatical/Sabbath year in CC,¹⁸ D and H. These laws can be found in Exod 21:2–6; 23:10–11; Lev 25:1–7, 18–22 and Deut 15:1–11, 12–18. Exod 21:2–6; 23:10–11; Lev 25:1–7 and Deut 15:1–18 have similar terminology regarding the laws that take effect every seven years.¹⁹ For example, the Hebrew words שבת means ‘rest’ (cf. Gen 2:2–3; Exod 23:12), שמיט in Exod 23:11 means ‘rest, fallow’ of the land, whereas in Deut 15:1 it means ‘cancel, remission’ of debts.

These laws regarding the seventh year have three main features:

- a) fallow legislation
- b) release laws and
- c) institution of redemption.

18 CC has two regulations concerning the sabbatical year; one about slavery (Exod 21) and one about agriculture and land fallow (Exod 23). About the structure of the collection see (Baker 2009, 8).

19 See e.g. Cholewinski (1976, 217–251); Otto (1999, 164–172).

Deut 15:1–3 prescribes that in the seventh year all debts of a fellow Jew are cancelled. Exod 21:2–6 and Deut 15:12–18 have a similar expression regarding the emancipation of slaves. They mention neither fallow years nor redemption legislation. However, Exod 23:11–12 and Lev 25 have some rules regarding the seventh-year fallow and the Lord's land. The land needs to have the Sabbath rest, which means that nature as well as mankind is included in the Sabbath rules. Only Lev 25 describes the seventh year as a Sabbath year. The importance of the land having a regular rest period in that year is connected with the rest of human beings, animals and the land on the Sabbath day but the release laws for slaves and land should be taken into consideration during the time of Jubilee. The year of Jubilee is also a fallow year and year of release and it is connected with the institution of redemption²⁰ as well.

In every case, the seventh year describes the agricultural society in Israel.²¹ The land as the Lord's gift was renewed throughout its natural life cycle. A cyclical pattern of seventh year was important for the temporal and natural order.

Scholars mostly agree that CC is the oldest version of the law and has priority over D's and H's regulations.²² However, there is no consensus among them regarding the dating of D and H.²³ The arguments produced in favour of D's dependence on Lev 25 are quite questionable.²⁴ Most scholars accept the notion that some additions and expansions of some texts indicate the newer and more developed text arising from the older shortest one. However, for

20 "It basically denotes the rightful getting back of a person or object that had once belonged to one or to one's family but had been lost." (Westbrook 1991, 58). E.g. redemption of the land may be found in Lev 25; Ruth 4 and Jer 32:6–15.

21 The practice of periodical rest of the land has been known to farmers in the Ancient Near East because continuously planted fields could not be productive all the time. Farmers needed to allow rest for the land in order not to put productivity into decline. See Cairns (1992, 146).

22 See e.g. Schenker (1998, 23–41); Otto (1999, 164–172).

23 H is later than D, see e.g. Wellhausen (1963); Cholewinski (1976); Gnuse (1985); Kaufmann (1985); Amit (1992); Lefebvre (2003); Nihan (2007). D is later than H. See e.g. Wright (1984); Japhet (1986); Chirichigno (1993); Joosten (1994); Milgrom (2001); Bergsma (2007).

24 These arguments are mainly based on the 'slave' or 'manumission' legislations in Lev 25:39–55. The unique occurrence of שִׁכָּר in Deut 15:8 is used there by the notion of the comparison of the hire wages of the loan worker and the cost of a slave. Furthermore, the word 'ebed' appear only in Deut 15:16–17 dealing with the life-long slave. Some authors interpret in Deut 15:12–18 'under your authority' having a different meaning than in the rest of D. ... "the idea that D devised its laws for debt-release (Deut 15:1–3) as a supplement to H's law for land release (25:1–7) is difficult to admit." (Nihan 2007, 523).

example Van Seters claims opposite.²⁵ He wrongly concludes that CC modifies and summarises the laws of D and H, i.e. that CC is later than D and H (Van Seters 2003, 82–95, 158). For example, Van Seters places Exod 21:1–7 in the same historical period as the book of Nehemiah (Van Seters 1996, 543–544). It is obvious that Van Seters does not give enough critical arguments for his arbitrary explanation. Contrarily to Van Seters, Levinson gives a very strong criticism of Van Seters, rightly confirming that CC is not the Babylonian exilic composition (Levinson 2004, 272–325).

It is important to underline that the socio-economic and cultural connect-edness between the laws of CC, H and D and the seventh year are obvious.

2.1 *The Seventh Year in the Holiness Code and the Covenant Code*

2.1.1 Leviticus 25:1–7

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּהַר סִינַי לֵאמֹר:	1
דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי תָבֹאוּ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם וְשָׁבְתָה הָאָרֶץ שְׁבַת לַיהוָה:	2
שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְרַע שְׂדֶךְ וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְמַר כַּרְמְךָ וְאָסַפְתָּ אֶת־תְּבוּאָתָהּ:	3
וּבִשְׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית שְׁבַת שְׁבַתוֹן יִהְיֶה לָאָרֶץ שְׁבַת לַיהוָה שְׂדֶךְ לֹא תִזְרַע וְכַרְמְךָ לֹא תִזְמַר:	4
אֵת סִפְיָה קִצִּירְךָ לֹא תִקְצֹר וְאֶת־עֲנָבֶיךָ לֹא תִבְצֹר שְׁנַת שְׁבַתוֹן יִהְיֶה לָאָרֶץ:	5
וְהָיְתָה שְׁבַת הָאָרֶץ לָכֶם לְאָכְלָהּ לֶךְ וּלְעֶבֶדְךָ וּלְאִמְתְּךָ וּלְחוֹשְׁבְּךָ הַגֵּרִים עִמָּךְ:	6
וּלְבַהֲמֹתֶיךָ וּלְחִיָּה אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרְצְךָ תִּהְיֶה כָל־תְּבוּאָתָהּ לְאָכְלָהּ:	7

- 1 the Lord spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai, saying:
- 2 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a Sabbath for the Lord.
- 3 Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield;
- 4 but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for the land, a Sabbath for the Lord: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard.

25 Van Seters notices that the shortest text may infer later and newer dating. For him, it is not necessary to interpret the expanded texts as a more developed text. He criticises the conviction that the law of the Hebrew slave in CC is the oldest one. In his attempt to interpret 'correctly' the history of the slave law in the Bible, he begins his investigation with D and H (Van Seters 2003).

- 5 You shall not reap the aftergrowth of your harvest or gather the grapes of your unpruned vine: it shall be a year of complete rest for the land.
- 6 You may eat what the land yields during its Sabbath—you, your male and female slaves, your hired and your bound labourers who live with you;
- 7 for your livestock also, and for the wild animals in your land all its yield shall be for food.

The parallelism and a clear analogy between the Sabbath year and the Sabbath day are obvious in Lev 25 (Bergsma 2007, 51). In Lev 25:2–7, the land needs to rest²⁶ every seventh year. The seventh year shall be a ‘Sabbath for the Lord’. Honouring the Lord and allowing the land to rest have the main meaning of the phrase ‘Sabbath for the Lord’ in vv. 2, 4 (Baker 2009, 228). The people shall not work on the land because the seventh year is a year of complete rest for the land. This phrase שְׁבַת שְׁבַתוֹ in v. 4 occurs also in Lev 23:3 where it is connected with the Sabbath and in Lev 23:32 with the Day of Atonement when all work is forbidden.

A benefit of keeping that law in Lev 25 means security and sustenance for the Lord’s people. The Israelites may gather after growth of the Sabbath year without active cultivation because the sixth year harvest will be a very rich harvest lasting until the ninth year (Lev 25:20–22).²⁷ The Israelites are allowed to gather for food during the Sabbath year but only the land must observe a total cessation of cultivation (שְׁבַת שְׁבַתוֹ). Lev 25:4b–7 forbids sowing and pruning, but permit gleaning. The people and animals in the land may eat what the land yields during its Sabbath year. Vv. 6–7 permit all those who live with their landowner to benefit from the yield of the land, which contradicts vv. 4b, 5a. It is most likely that vv. 4–5 are following Exod 23, whereas vv. 6–7 are the H’s innovation (Milgrom 2004, 2156).

26 Land resting occurs in Lev 25:2, 3, 4, 6; 26:34, 35; 2 Chron 36:21. Regarding 2 Chron 36:20–23 little scholarly work has been done. E.g. Johnstone argues that the genealogies in Chron-icler have been structured on a Jubilee pattern. He interprets the fiftieth generation from Adam as the generation of the exile. This generation accepted Cyrus’ Jubilee proclamation. Cyrus’ decree authorises liberty from exile, return to the land and cultic renewal (2 Chron 36:20–23) (Johnstone 2000, 307–314).

27 The Lord’s promise of abundant harvest in the sixth year can be compared with the sixth day in the wilderness in Exod 16 and the double provision of manna on the sixth day and also with the sixth day of the creation when the Lord created animals and a man. See Baker (2009, 231).

The Mishnah explains that all yield that appear on the branch during the Sabbath year²⁸ are food for the people living in the land. Figs, grapes and olives shall ripen before the people gather them for food during the Sabbath year. All yields of the Sabbath year must be taken in their unprocessed condition because those products are sanctified by the Lord who is the owner of the land and its products (Mishnah 4:7–9, 8:1–9).

A year of complete rest in Lev 25:5 means that the concept of Sabbath in H has been extended on legal and temporal levels too (Stackert 2011, 14–15). The resting of the land, human beings and animals in the seventh year, i.e. in regular fallow years, sustains the fertility of the land (Hamilton 1992, 95). The resting of the land means to honour the Lord as the ultimate owner of the land (Lev 25:2, 4, 23).

2.1.2 Exodus 23:10–12

	וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְרַע אֶת־אֲרָצְךָ וְאָסַפְתָּ אֶת־תְּבוּאָתָהּ:	10
	וְהַשְּׁבִיעִית תִּשְׁמְטָנָהּ וְנִטְשָׁתָהּ וְאָכְלוּ אֲבִינֵי עַמְּךָ חֵית הַשָּׂדֶה	11
	בְּזִיתְעֶשֶׂה לְכַרְמְךָ לַיִּיתָד:	
	שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי תִשְׁבֹּת לְמַעַן יָנוּחַ שׁוֹרְךָ וַחֲמֹרְךָ וַיִּנְפֹּשׁ	12
	בְּזִיאָמְתְּךָ וְהִגֵּר:	

- 10 For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield;
 11 but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.
 12 Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may have relief, and your home born slave and the resident alien may be refreshed.

Exod 23:10–12 speaks about the seventh year and Sabbath day.²⁹ They are symbolic reminders of people's dependence on the Lord and his control over the land and time (Cairns 1992, 146–147). In the seventh year the land needs to lie unused and unploughed, i.e. every seventh year land, vineyards and olive groves must lie uncultivated. The produce of the land in the seventh year needs to be taken and used by the poor and wild animals too. Exod 23:10–11

28 The early Christian authors, the Qumran texts and the apocryphal writers do not mention the seventh or Sabbatical year.

29 See e.g. Kim (2011, 72–73).

was some kind of religious, primitive agrarian rule or a kind of a restoration for the land during the seventh year (Noth 1965, 183 ff.). Religious belief and agricultural activity were combined together at that time. It is hard to conclude from the text that this rule was a fixed year or not. It is most likely that it was observed individually by the owners of the land³⁰ (Bergsma 2007, 49–50). In that case, it will be possible for the poor to find some food every year, not only every seven years. The regulation regarding leaving the land unplanted during the seventh year is concerned first of all for helping the poor in society. It is not an encouragement for people to neglect the repayment of their debts.

2.2 *Conclusion Regarding the Relations between Exodus 23:10–12 and Leviticus 25:1–7*

Lev 25:2 speaks about the entire land that shall observe a Sabbath, whereas Exodus mentions only individual holdings of the land, i.e. your 'land/field' (23:10). Lev 25:1–7 makes clear that the Sabbath year is a universal, simultaneous, fixed year for all Israelites whereas Exod 23:10–12 speaks about the fallow year every seventh year for each field and its farmer. Thus, we may agree with Nihan's statement:

The 7th year of Exod 23 is reinterpreted from H's distinct perspective. While the connection between the seventh year and the seventh day, as a day of rest, was already made in the CC (Exod 23:10–11,12) the 7th year is now interpreted as a Sabbatical year for the land 25:2, 4, 5, on the model of the transformation of the seventh day of rest into the fixed weekly Sabbath after the exile ... The fallow year, which was not intended to be practiced by the Israelites in Exod 23 has now become a fixed institution in Israel's calendar, to be observed at the same time by the entire community.

NIHAN 2004, 525

The fallow or seventh year in Exod 23:10–11 is transformed in Lev 25:1–7 into the Sabbath year of rest for the land that belongs to the Lord. Sabbatical is connected with the Sabbath for the Lord (Lev 25:4). That kind of rest responds to the land's fertility. The seventh year is a Sabbath for the Lord and because of that the Israelites shall not sow fields nor prune vineyards.

30 See also Milgrom (2001, 2250); Bailey (2005, 301).

Contrarily to Exod 23:11 which mentions only the poor, H speaks about different kinds of people and animals who are to be provided for by the fecundity of the land in the seventh year. It is possible for the Israelites, their male and female slaves, their hired and bound labourers, livestock and wild animals in the land to eat what the land yields during its Sabbath (vv. 4–7). However, H is very much concerned regarding the poor and we may find some laws that give protection and care for the poor and needy (e.g. Lev 19:9–10; 23:22).

Contrarily to Exod 23:11, Lev 25:6–7 denies access for the poor to after growth during the Sabbath year because the owner of the land has responsibility toward the members of his household, family, slaves, resident workers, aliens. The laws of Jubilee and the institutions of redemption serve mainly the poor and needy people and because of that there shall not be landless people (Milgrom 2004, 177). The owner of the land and his household should prepare for themselves the produce that has been put aside from the previous years (Lev 25:20–22). The Lord has entrusted his land to the whole covenant community.

As we may see from the texts, the seventh year in Exod 23:10–11 and the Sabbath year in Lev 25:2–7 refer to the same institution that is connected with religious, agricultural, social and humanitarian aspects (Chirichigno 1993, 350). Through a literary comparison of the parallels between Exod 23:10–11 and Lev 25:2–7, it may be concluded that the Exodus passage is the earliest text and it is expanded in Lev 25. “The Sabbatical year law already appears in the Covenant Book (Exod 23:10–11). The linguistic affinities between the two laws (compare Lev 25:3 with Exod 23:10) indicate that HS was guided by the Covenant Book law but chose to emphasise the sacral overtones of the Sabbatical year institution.” (Knohl 2007, 217).

2.3 *The Laws Concerning the Hebrew Slaves³¹ in the Book of the Covenant*

2.3.1 Exodus 21:1–6

וְאֵלֶּה הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמֹר לִפְנֵיהֶם:	1
כִּי תִקְנֶה עֶבֶד עֲבָדֵי שָׁשׁ שָׁנִים יַעֲבֹד וּבְשַׁבְּעַת יֵצֵא לְחֶפְשׁוֹ חֲנֹם:	2
אִם־בָּגַפוּ יָבֵא בָגָפוֹ יֵצֵא אִם־בָּעַל אִשָּׁה הוּא וַיֵּצֵאָהּ אִשְׁתּוֹ עִמּוֹ:	3
אִם־אֲדָנָיו יִתְּנֶלָּו אִשָּׁה וַיִּלְדֶּה־לָּו בָּנִים אִוּ בָנוֹת הָאִשָּׁה וַיִּלְדֶּיהָ תִּהְיֶה לְאֲדֹנֶיהָ וְהוּא יֵצֵא בָגָפוֹ:	4

31 In Israel slaves can be: war captives (e.g. Num 31:7–12; Deut 12:10–14; 2 Chron 28:8), a person who sells things that are necessities for his/her life (e.g. 2 Kgs 4:1; Neh 5:5), a person who

וְאִם־אָמַר יֹאמַר הַעֲבָד אֶהְבֵּתִי אֶת־אֲדֹנָי אֶת־אִשְׁתִּי וְאֶת־בְּנֵי לֹא אֵצֵא חֲפָזִי: 5
 וְהִגִּישׁוּ אֲדֹנָיו אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים וְהִגִּישׁוּ אֶל־הַדֹּלֶת אִוְּ אֶל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְרָצַע אֲדֹנָיו אֶת־אָזְנוֹ 6
 בַּמַּרְצֵעַ וְעָבְדוֹ לְעֹלָם:

- 1 These are the ordinances that you shall set before them:
- 2 When you buy a male Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, but in the seventh he shall go out a free person, without debt.
- 3 If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him.
- 4 If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's and he shall go out alone.
- 5 But if the slave declares, "I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out a free person,"
- 6 then his master shall bring him before God. He shall be brought to the door or the doorpost; and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him for life.

Only verse one in the twenty first chapter in CC has the superscription, which indicates that these commandments or laws (הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים) form a separate collection. The superscription underlines the Lord's authority upon these commandments because he gave them directly to Moses in order to mediate them to his people (Childs 1974, 467).

Scholars mostly agree that the seventh year regulation in Exod 21:2–6 is connected with the Sabbath (cf. Exod 20:8–10; Deut 5:12–14) and the Sabbatical year (cf. Exod 23:10–11; Lev 25:1–7; Deut 15:1–3).³² Exod 21:2–6 is concerned with some practical issues regarding the seventh year and release of the male slave. Usually, CC presents slaves³³ as a property and their consequent relationships with his/her society. It is obvious in CC that the slave depends upon the will of his or her master and the manumission law is concerned with the one who has control over the dependent person (Hamilton 1992, 86).

sells himself due to debts or hunger (e.g. Exod 21:5–6; Lev 25:39–43; Deut 15:16–17), a thief who cannot pay a sum of money imposed as a penalty for his offence (e.g. Exod 21:37–22:3), a widow who cannot pay her husband's debts (e.g. 2 Kgs 4:1), persons who cannot repay their debts (e.g. Neh 5:1–13; Am 2:6, 8:6) (Milgrom 2004, 304).

32 See e.g. Driver (1911); North (1954).

33 About slaves and households in the Near East see also Culbertson (2011).

The Hebrew term עֶבֶד עֲבָדִי ‘hebrew slave’³⁴ has been much discussed by scholars.³⁵ It is most likely that it indicates social status of persons who have fallen into slavery (Baker 2009, 111–174). Sometimes this word is associated with the word *habiru*, which was used in the Ancient Near East for a social class, i.e. enslavement during the second millennium B.C.E. Parallel between a *habiru* and Exod 21:2–6, i.e. the comparison of the casuistic laws of CC and the Babylonian codes leads some scholars to the conclusion that CC is the oldest manumission law in the Pentateuch.³⁶

The male slave shall go out as a free person in the seventh year without paying and receiving anything in the seventh year of release. If he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him as a free person too. But if his master gives him a wife during the period of slavery then he shall be freed in the seventh year and go out without his wife. His wife and the children born during the time of his slavery remain to be in the possession of the master (Exod 21:4).

Slaves are free to make the decision whether they want to be free people after the six years of slavery or to remain to be slaves permanently. There is the individual start date for each male slave and the seventh-year period is a time for each of them to work as a slave (Bergsma 2007, 46). In a case that the slave wants to remain to be a slave for the rest of his life then his master needs to bring him to God אֱלֹהֵינוּ. The Septuagint’s translation of the word is πρὸς τὸ κριτηριον Θεου, i.e. to the judgment of God (v. 6). This term may denote also the sanctuary for a judgment (cf. Exod 22:8–9). ‘Bring him to the door’ or ‘bring him to the Lord’ (Exod 21:6) implies a ceremony at the local special place or before the sanctuary.³⁷ The master needs to pierce his ear with an awl. This ceremony

34 The term עֶבֶד can also denote a servant (for a period of time, not in bondage) (1 Sam 29:3), a dependent person in a position of trust (2 Kgs 22:12), a man’s position before the Lord as a slave or servant (Gen 24:12), a slave held in bondage (Gen 12:6), a state slave (1 Kgs 9:27), a subordinate position (Gen 14:15; 20:8; 2 Kgs 10:5) (North 2000, 61–64).

35 See e.g. Chirichigno (1993); Culbertson (2011).

36 E.g. Lowery (2000, 24). Contra, Van Seters underlines that the person mentioned in Exod 21:2 is already a slave but his seller is a foreigner. This explanation leads him to the wrong conclusion that this law is the newest one compared with the manumission laws in H and D (Van Seters 2003, 87). However, the semantic value of the word עֲבָדִי denotes an Israelite debt-slave, i.e. an Israelite in financial difficulty who needs to become a slave in order to pay his debts (Exod 21:2). See also Childs (1974); Wright (1990); Chirichigno (1993); Baker (2009). Term ‘Hebrew’ in other parts of Exodus describes Israelites as a permanent class of forced hard workers in Egypt. It can be the word for Israelites as slaves for Egyptians (e.g. Exod 1:15, 16, 19; 2:6, 7, 11, 13) (Lowery 2000, 29–30).

37 See Noth (1962).

denotes the permanent slavery of the pierced person. It demonstrates that he is closely connected to his master's house and family. He is obliged to listen and obey all his master's commands.³⁸

2.3.2 Exodus 21:7–11

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|--|--|----|
| | וְכִי־יִמְכֹּר אִישׁ אֶת־בִּתּוֹ לְאָמָהּ לֹא תֵצֵא כְּצֹאת הָעֶבְדִּים: | 7 |
| | אִם־רָעָה בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר־לֹא יַעֲדָה וְהַפְדָּהּ לָעַם נָכְרִי לֹא־יִמְשָׁל לְמַכְרָהּ | 8 |
| | בְּבִגְדֵי־יָבָהּ: | |
| | וְאִם־לִבָּנוּ יִיעֲדָנָה כְּמִשְׁפֶּט הַבָּנוֹת יַעֲשֶׂה־לָּהּ: | 9 |
| | אִם־אֶחָרָת יִקַּח־לּוֹ שְׂאֵרָה כְּסוּתָהּ וְעֲנֻתָהּ לֹא יִגְרַע: | 10 |
| | וְאִם־שְׁלֹשׁ־אַלֶּה לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה לָּהּ וַיֵּצֵאָה חֲנָם אִין כֶּסֶף: | 11 |
- 7 When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do.
- 8 If she does not please her master, who designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed; he shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt unfairly with her.
- 9 If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter.
- 10 If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish the food, clothing, or marital rights of the first wife.
- 11 And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out without debt, without payment of money.

The case of a female slave is different from the case of a man slave. Vv. 7–8 speak about a female slave who cannot be freed as a man slave after six years. A Hebrew woman could be enslaved when her father sold her to the purchaser. The text is silent about the reason for selling the daughter. Probably, the father is in financial difficulties and the only alternative is to sell the daughter. Van Seters emphasises that fathers are Hebrew men not foreigners who sell their daughters. Daughters are Hebrew women but purchasers are for-

38 Piercing or boring of the ear was a custom in the Ancient Near East as well. With that sign of slavery, a pierced slave loses his integrity. Piercing was probably symbolic act that confirmed the slave's entering into the master's household and obedience to the master of the household (cf. Ps 40:6–8) (Sprinkle 1994, 55–56). The text speaks about the reasons why the slave wants to be a slave for life in v. 5 “if the slave declares, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free.’” The released slave must make decision regarding his family, life with his master or his personal freedom.

eigners (Van Seters 2003, 90). This is not a correct statement because the text does not mention that.

Primarily women are sold for the purpose of marriage, i.e. the female slave is usually the concubine of her master. The value of woman is connected also with her ability to have children (Lowery 2000, 25). She becomes part of his family and as a member of the family she has certain rights. In the case that her master does not like her, i.e. if she does not please her master, then she may be redeemed by her own people. Also, she cannot be sold to foreigners. If she is designated for a master's son (v. 9) then her master shall give her the same dowry or privileges he would give to one of his own daughters. These laws tell us that if a master's son married his female slave, by his father's agreement, the father is obliged to respect her as a daughter. If the master marries another woman (v. 10), he is obliged to provide for her food, clothing and all other duty of marriage (vv. 9–10). The woman shall be maintained with her full marital rights.

These texts deal with three things concerning the female person: when a master marries her himself, when he lets her to be redeemed and probably married to another man, and lets his son marry her. The institution of redemption is mentioned only in v. 8 in the Exodus law.

2.4 *Conclusion Regarding the Laws Concerning the Slaves in the Book of the Covenant*

Exod 21:2–11 has two different laws: the law in Exod 21:2–6 about a male debt-slave and the seventh year release and the law of the female slave in vv. 7–11. Male slaves shall be sold by themselves or their relatives because of poverty, whereas female slaves shall be sold by their fathers. The first law in Exod 21:2–6 considers the release of a male who was sold by the head of an extended family who failed to pay a loan when it was due. It refers to the sale of a dependent person who was a member of household. Also, it speaks about the duty of masters towards their male slaves. The second one in Exod 21:7–11 refers to a marriage contract or some kind of adoption. In the first case, an Israelite had a right to be released after serving six years but in the second, the law protects a female Israelite who had the right to be released in a case when her husband did not fulfil his obligation to her (Chirichigno 1993, 345–346). The female slave could be released only if her master or husband does not obey his part of the marriage agreement. But, if she is sold unconditionally then she will be a slave for life.

2.5 *The Seventh Year in the Deuteronomic Law: Deuteronomy 15:1-18*

- 1 מִקֵּץ שִׁבְע־שָׁנִים תַּעֲשֶׂה שְׁמִטָּה:
 2 וְזֶה דְּבַר הַשְּׁמִטָּה שְׁמוּט כָּל־בַּעַל מִשָּׂה יָדוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִשֶּׂה בְּרַעְיוֹ לֹא־יִגָּשׁ אֶת־רַעְיוֹ
 וְאֶת־אֲחִיו כִּי־קָרָא שְׁמִטָּה לַיהוָה:
 3 אֶת־הַנִּכְרִי תִגָּשׁ וְאֲשֶׁר לֹךְ אֶת־אֲחִיד תִּשְׁמַט יָדָךְ:
 4 אָפֶס כִּי לֹא יִהְיֶה־בָּךְ אֲבִיּוֹן כִּי־בִרְךָ יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן־לָךְ
 נַחֲלָה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ:
 5 רַק אִם־שְׁמוּטַת תִּשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשַׁמֵּר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת
 אֲשֶׁר אֲנִכִּי מִצְוֶה הַיּוֹם:
 6 כִּי־יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּרָכָךְ בְּאֶשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ לְךָ וְהַעֲבַטְתָּ גּוֹיִם רַבִּים וְאַתָּה לֹא תַעֲבֹט וּמִשְׁלַת
 בְּגוֹיִם רַבִּים וּבָךְ לֹא יִמְשְׁלוּ: ס
 7 כִּי־יִהְיֶה בָּךְ אֲבִיּוֹן מֵאֶחָד אֲחִיד בְּאֶחָד שְׁעָרֶיךָ בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ
 לֹא תֹאמַן אֶת־לִבְּךָ וְלֹא תִקַּפֵּן אֶת־יָדְךָ מֵאֲחִיד הָאֲבִיּוֹן:
 8 כִּי־פָתַח תִּפְתָּח אֶת־יָדְךָ לוֹ וְהַעֲבַט תַּעֲבִיטֵנּוּ דִּי מַחֲסֻוֹ אֲשֶׁר יַחֲסֹר לוֹ:
 9 הַשְּׁמֵר לָךְ פֶּן־יִהְיֶה דְּבַר עַם־לִבְּךָ בְּלִיעַל לֵאמֹר קָרְבָה שְׁנַת־הַשְּׁבַע שְׁנַת הַשְּׁמִטָּה
 וְרָעָה עֲנִיד בְּאֲחִיד הָאֲבִיּוֹן וְלֹא תִתֵּן לוֹ וְקָרָא עָלֶיךָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהָיָה בָּךְ חָטָא:
 10 נָתַן תִּתֵּן לוֹ וְלֹא־יִרַע לִבְּךָ בְּתִתֵּן לוֹ כִּי בְּגִלְלָן הַדֵּבַר הַזֶּה יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
 בְּכָל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּבְכָל מַשְׁלַח יָדְךָ:
 11 כִּי לֹא־יִחַדֵּל אֲבִיּוֹן מִקְרֹב הָאֶרֶץ עַל־כֵּן אֲנִכִּי מִצְוֶה לֵאמֹר פָּתַח תִּפְתָּח אֶת־יָדְךָ
 לְאֲחִיד לַעֲנִיד וּלְאֲבִינָךְ בְּאֶרֶץ:

- 1 Every seventh year you shall grant a remission of debts.
- 2 And this is the manner of the remission: every creditor shall remit the claim that is held against a neighbour, not exacting it of a neighbour who is a member of the community, because the Lord's remission has been proclaimed.
- 3 Of a foreigner you may exact it, but you must remit your claim on whatever any member of your community owes you.
- 4 There will, however, be no one in need among you, because the Lord is sure to bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a possession to occupy,
- 5 if only you will obey the Lord your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today.
- 6 When the Lord your God has blessed you, as he promised you, you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.
- 7 If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbour.

- 8 You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be.
- 9 Be careful that you do not entertain a mean thought, thinking, “The seventh year, the year of remission, is near,” and therefore view your needy neighbour with hostility and give nothing; your neighbour might cry to the Lord against you, and you would incur guilt.
- 10 Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.
- 11 Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, “Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbour in your land.”

12 כִּי־יִמְכַר לְךָ אֶחֱיד הָעֶבְרִי אוֹ הָעֶבְרִיָּה וַעֲבָדְךָ שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים וּבִשְׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִת תְּשַׁלְּחֶנּוּ
חֲפָשִׁי מֵעִמָּךְ:
13 וְכִי־תִשְׁלַחֲנּוּ חֲפָשִׁי מֵעִמָּךְ לֹא תִשְׁלַחֲנּוּ רִיקָם:
14 הַעֲנִיִּק תַעֲנִיֵּק לוֹ מִצֹּאֲנֶךָ וּמִגֶּרְנֶךָ וּמִיִּקְבֶּךָ אֲשֶׁר בֵּרַכְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִתֵּן־לוֹ:
15 וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וַיִּפְדֶּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עַל־כֵּן אֲנִכִּי מִצֹּוֹ אֶת־הַדָּבָר
הַזֶּה הַיּוֹם:
16 וְהָיָה כִּי־יֹאמַר אֱלִיד לֹא אֵצֵא מֵעִמָּךְ כִּי אֶהְבֶּד וְאֶת־בֵּיתְךָ כִּי־טוֹב לוֹ עִמָּךְ:
17 וְלִקְחַתָּ אֶת־הַמַּרְצֵעַ וְנָתַתָּהּ בְּאָזְנוֹ וּבִדְלֶת וְהָיָה לְךָ עֶבֶד עוֹלָם וְאִף לְאִמָּתְךָ
תַעֲשֶׂה־כֵּן:
18 לֹא־יִקָּשֶׁה בְּעֵינֶךָ בְּשַׁלְּחֶךָ אֹתוֹ חֲפָשִׁי מֵעִמָּךְ כִּי מִשְׁנֶה שְׂכָר שְׂכִיר עֲבָדְךָ שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים
וּבִרְכֶּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר תַעֲשֶׂה:

- 12 If a member of your community, whether a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you and works for you six years, in the seventh year you shall set that person free.
- 13 And when you send a male slave out from you a free person, you shall not send him out empty-handed.
- 14 Provide liberally out of your flock, your threshing floor, and your wine press, thus giving to him some of the bounty with which the Lord your God has blessed you.
- 15 Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you; for this reason I lay this command upon you today.
- 16 But if he says to you, “I will not go out from you,” because he loves you and your household, since he is well off with you,
- 17 then you shall take an awl and thrust it through his earlobe into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. You shall do the same with regard to your female slave

- 18 Do not consider it a hardship when you send them out from you free persons, because for six years they have given you services worth the wages of hired labourers; and the Lord your God will bless you in all that you do.

The text is concerned with the laws regarding the debts and slavery in the ancient societies based on a seven-year cycle.³⁹ Deut 15:1–11⁴⁰ is more concerned with the remission of debts whereas Deut 15:12–18 with the release of slaves.⁴¹ Deut 15:1–18 does not mention Sabbatical. It can be that D avoids seeing the seventh year as a Sabbatical, which is contrarily to H.⁴² Deut 15:1, 9b speak about the seventh year of the release שְׁנַת־הַשְּׁבִיעִי שְׁנַת־הַשְּׁמִטָּה.

The Hebrew term for “release” (Deut 15:1) is *shemittah*. The corresponding Hebrew verb (meaning “set free”, “let fall”, “let be”) is used in Exod 23:10–11 for letting, the land rest fallow in the seventh year (the “Sabbath year”, according to Lev 25:1–7). This verb *shamat* is rare in the Old Testament and is likely a technical term, which in early times applied in the agricultural setting and in later times was adapted to an urban and commercial economy.

CAIRNS 1992, 146

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- 39 “Although there are many terminological parallels between the Jubilee legislation of Lev 25:8–55 and Deut 15:1–18 indicating that Lev 25 is a further case of reception of D, the law of vv. 8–55 is considerably more developed than its Deuteronomic counterpart and offers a systematic reinterpretation of the latter.” (Nihan 2007, 526).
- 40 See also Hamilton (1992, 7–43); Houston (2006, 179–184); Baker (2009, 278–283).
- 41 Deut 15:1 and Lev 25:8–12 contain the descriptions of the year of release, which is followed by the explanation of the socio-economic applications (Lev 25:13–17; Deut 15:2–3). The prosperity of the land depends on conditional obedience and fulfilment of God’s laws (Lev 25:18–19; Deut 15:4–6). Furthermore, the legislation about the support for the impoverished Israelite ‘brother’ (Lev 25:35–38) corresponds to Deut 15:7–11. The law on debt slavery in Lev 25:39–55 parallels Deut 15:12–18. The two slave legislations represent the treatment of the slave by mentioning the exodus (Lev 25:42, 55; Deut 15:15). It is obvious that the author of H makes the connection with D and its explanation of debt-release (Deut 15:1–11) and slave-release (Deut 15:12–18). However, H takes that further by using several additional cases. For example, the sale of one’s property (vv. 25–28), or of one’s house in a walled town (vv. 29–31), the enslavement of an Israelite by a non-Israelite. Also, H arranges these cases to exemplify three successive stages in a situation of gradual economic destitution (Nihan 2007, 527).
- 42 The arguments produced in favour of D’s dependence of Lev 25 by some authors are quite

This regulation does not mention the fallow of the land every seventh year whereas Exod 23:10–11 and Lev 25:2–7 do that. But because Deut 15:1 uses the same term for release as is used in Exod 23:10–11 for ‘lie fallow’, it may be concluded that the release year and the fallow year relate to each other (North 1954, 184–190).

The seventh year of the release in Deut 15 is concerned with economy of the society. Some scholars suggest that the seventh year in this context means only the postponement in recalling the debt but this is not true because the biblical text speaks clearly about the cancellation of debts. D is aware of the ethical implications of its legislations. Thus, D combines obedience of God’s chosen people to his commandment with security and blessing. People obedient to the commandments will not be poor (Deut 15:5) (Biddle 2003, 256–257).

Furthermore, Deut 15 is concerned with the year of release for the desperate people⁴³ of the covenant community facing financial crisis. Prosperity of the covenant community is the main concern here. If the people keep the Lord’s commandments, then they will be blessed by the Lord. They will have more than enough resources for life. Moreover, they will be able to lend to other nations and rule over them too. That kind of practice has the intention of preventing poverty. ‘There will be no poor among you’ (Deut 15:4). If they have a person in need among them, they should open their hands and willingly lend enough to meet their needs. D speaks about the motivation of the lender, which is not case for the Priestly legislation. Vv. 7–8 say that the Israelites should not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted towards the needy neighbour. The Israelites need to keep the Lord’s commandment “open your hand to the poor and needy neighbour in your land” (Deut 15:11b). They need to give liberally and honestly.⁴⁴

uncertain. See e.g. Japhet (1986, 70–74); Chirichigno (1993, 329); Milgrom (2001, 2254–2257). The complete absence of reference to a state context in Lev 25 leads these scholars to interpret the Jubilee legislation in Lev 25 as a premonarchic product. This is historically unlikely and opens up a question why the Jubilee would be ignored by CC and D (Nihan 2007, 523–524).

43 E.g. Houston argues that Deuteronomy mentions the alien, widow and fatherless together. Aliens were non-Israelites and they were defined according to their socio-economic situation (Houston 1991, 107–108).

44 “YHWH, who watches over the oppressed, may well note the stinginess of the selfish lender who has himself benefited from YHWH’s generosity in times of need. On the other hand, since assistance to the needy is YHWH-like and demonstrates grateful appreciation for YHWH’s deliverance and blessing, YHWH will reward it with blessing on all the lender’s undertakings (v. 10).” (Biddle 2003, 258).

The seventh year cycle is concerned with the release of debts, i.e. a proclamation of the Lord's remission of debts, the release of a slave, sustenance for a newly freed slave, remembrance on the slavery in the land of Egypt and an example of life-long slavery. The length of the work corresponds with the size of the debt. People who owed more needed to work longer in order to pay off their obligation. Deut 15:12–18 brings limitation of bond service to seven years. The seventh year as the year of remission of debts was not a universal year for all Israelites in Deut 15:12–18 but it is in Deut 31:9–13.

Apart from these agricultural and economic measures, the seventh year has a special place in the religion of Israel. In Deuteronomy 31:9–13 it is linked with the public reading of the Law (תורה). When a covenant was made in ancient times, it was usual for an official document to be kept in a mutually agreed place and read publicly from time to time. So also the Law, as the official document of the covenant between God and Israel, is to be read every seven years to the whole people of Israel; and the time specified for this public reading is during the festival of Booths in the year of remission of debts.

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The year of remission of debts was a universal, simultaneous year for the Israelites but the release of slaves⁴⁵ was not a fixed year for all slaves. The cyclical cessation of the labour of the slave after six years of slavery, i.e. freedom from slavery in the seventh year of his or her work is one of the main concerns of Deut 15. However, if a slave does not want to leave his/her master in that case the master takes an awl and thrusts it through the slave's earlobe. D has a regulation that a ceremony of piercing the ear shall take place in secular surroundings. In that case, the slave becomes a slave for life (Deut 15:16–17). A slave makes that choice freely.

In the manumission law, the newly freed slave shall receive material things from his/her ex-master's bounty in order to be able to make a fresh start and to become an independent and a free person. The ex-master needs to give him/her liberally something from his flock, field and vineyard that God has blessed him (Deut 15:13–14). With the material support, the person will become

45 Wright and Chirichigno underline that the 'slave' envisioned by Exod 21:2–6 and Deut 15:12–18 is not connected with land, whereas the 'slave' in Lev 25 is closely connected to ancestral land (Wright 1990, 253–259; Chirichigno 1993, 275–300).

economically independent and capable for living. V. 17b includes women who have the same rights as men.

Care for the newly freed slave shows a humanitarian character of the manumission law in D, i.e. some kind of redistribution of wealth, a transfer of wealth from those who have abundantly to those who are without the resources for life. This law is mostly concerned with social justice regarding the needy (Clements 1998, 406).

The social transactions connect the three persons: a giver, a receiver and the Lord. The Lord cares for the socially vulnerable and marginalised people (Brueggemann 2001, 166). The Lord is especially connected with the poor, he listens to them and protects them. So, Deut 15 is concerned with those people who may stand in some danger of exclusion. The Israelites shall be aware of the issue that the Lord hears the cry of oppressed, dependent, abused people. Also, socio-economic justice is like a barometer of the health of society.

2.5.1 Conclusion Regarding the Remission of Debts and Release of Slaves in the Deuteronomy Laws

The law in D has the aim to protect the poor and all kind of people who depend on the dominant in the society. The Israelites are obligated to provide loans for the poor first of all because the covenant community should not have people with hard hearts and tight fists because the wealth of the land is not the result of human accomplishment but of the Lord's blessing.

The seventh year legislation is concerned with the redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor by the forgiveness of debts. The treatment of the dependent is some kind of reflection how the powerful should see themselves in their position of dependence on the Lord. For the justice and health of their society the Israelites shall remember their slavery in the land of Egypt.

Because of hard and unbearable work, and danger to their lives in their slavery, the Israelites cried to the Lord for deliverance. The Lord's answer to the cry of those bonded and oppressed people brought release from the hopeless situation and perpetual bondage. Through the Lord's deliverance the oppressed slaves become the free people dependent on the Lord who gave them a new possibility for life. Accordingly, the Lord's people should arrange their socio-economic and religious life with the full respect and care for the poor and needy. The socio-economic balance between people is a measure of healthy and faithful society.

3

Relations between the Legislations Concerning Slavery, Bonded and Hired Workers in the Book of the Covenant, the Deuteronomic Laws and the Holiness Code

Here is the synopsis of laws concerning slavery⁴⁶ and bonded or hired labourer in CC, D and H:

Exodus 21:2–6	Deuteronomy 15:12–18	Leviticus 25:39–43, 47–55
If you buy a male Hebrew slave,	If a member of your community, whether a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you	If any who are dependent on you become so impoverished that they sell themselves to you, you shall not make them serve as slaves. They shall remain with you as hired or bounded labourers.
he shall serve for six years, but in the seventh he shall go out as a free person without debt (v. 2)	and works for you six years, in the seventh year you shall set that person free (v. 12)	They shall serve with you until the year of jubilee (vv. 39–40)
If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's and he shall go out alone (vv. 3–4).	And when you send a male slave out from you a free person, you shall not send him out empty-handed. Provide liberally out of your flock, your threshing-floor, and your wine press, thus giving to him some of the bounty with which the Lord your God has blessed you.	Then they and their children with them shall be free from your authority; they shall go back to their own family and return to their ancestral property.

46 Slavery in Israel was different from slavery in the contemporary ancient Near Eastern societies and the later government of the Romans and the Greeks. Also, it is different than the position of slaves in Africa who were commercialised by the Americans and Europeans. Slaves in Israel had more legal rights than in some other contemporary communities. This is because the Israel slaves were mostly domestic hired workers who work off their debt to their creditor trough their labour (Wright 2004, 333).

(cont.)

Exodus 21:2–6

But if the slave declares, 'I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out free person', then his master shall bring him before God. He shall be brought to the door or the doorpost; and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him for life (vv. 5–6).

Deuteronomy 15:12–18

Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you; for this reason I lay this command upon you today (vv. 13–15).

But if he says to you, 'I will not go out from you', because he loves you and your household, since he is well off with you, then you shall take an awl, and thrust it through his earlobe into the door, and he shall be your slave forever.

You shall do the same with regard to your female slave (vv. 16–17).

Do not consider it a hardship when you send them out from you free persons, because for six years they have given you services worth the wages of hired labourers; and the Lord your God will bless you in all that you do. (v. 18).

Leviticus 25:39–43, 47–55

For they are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves are sold. You shall not rule over them with harshness, but shall fear your God (vv. 41–43).

If resident aliens among you prosper, and if any of your kin fall into difficulty with one of them and sell themselves to an alien, or to a branch of the alien's family, after they have sold themselves they shall have the right of redemption ... (vv. 47–52)

As a labourer hired by the year they shall be under the alien's authority, who shall not, however, rule with harshness over them in your sight. And if they have not been redeemed in any of these ways, they and their children with them shall go free in the jubilee year. For to me the people of Israel are

Exodus 21:2–6

Deuteronomy 15:12–18

Leviticus 25:39–43, 47–55

servants; they are my servants whom I brought out from the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. (vv. 53–55).

The laws regarding slavery and bonded labour in CC, D and H have some similarities. Baker has found fifteen verbal similarities between Exod 21 and Deut 15, and some similarities between Lev 25 and Deut 15.⁴⁷ However, Exodus and Leviticus do not have significant verbal similarity (Baker 2009, 148–149, 167–168). As we shall see, circumstances of Lev 25 are quite distinct from those mentioned in Exod 21 and Deut 15.

The laws regarding the seventh year in Exod 21 and Deut 15 are concerned with the release of slaves.⁴⁸ It is most likely that the manumission law of Deut 15 is based upon the manumission laws in Exod 21,⁴⁹ i.e. the Deuteronomy law modifies the older law⁵⁰ in Exod 21:2–6. Deut 15 has two additional things, such as the provision for debt-slaves when they are released and the release of female debt-slaves. Also, it omits the regulation concerning the marital rights of the female debt-slave. Unlike the law in Exodus, which is concerned with male slaves whereas it has a different regulation for females (Exod 21:7–11), the intent of the Deuteronomic law is that the master let male and female

47 Some authors have examined the relationships between Lev 25 and Deut 15 and they offer varieties of explanations. See e.g. Cholewinski (1976); Lemche (1976); Kaufmann (1984; 1985); Gnuse (1985); Japhet (1986); Wright (1990); Westbrook (1991); Robinson (1991); Chirichigno (1993); Tigay (1996); Van Seters (1996); Schenker (1998); Milgrom (2001); Wellhausen (2001); Nihan (2004; 2007).

48 The Hebrew word עֶבֶד 'slave, servant' describes both chattel-slaves and debt-slaves and sometimes it is very difficult to make a distinction between them. The Hebrew noun 'ebed' can mean both an indentured servant, i.e. debt slavery, working to pay off a loan and a true slave i.e. chattel slave. It is hard to distinguish always proper meaning in the Scriptures (Bailey 2005, 306). Chattel-slaves did not have rights for redemption and were treated as the property of their owners (Lev 25:44–45) but sometimes they were afforded certain rights normally afforded only to Israelites (Exod 21:20–22, 26–27) (Chirichigno 1993, 141–142, 146, 183).

49 We can find that Deut 15:12–18 and Exod 21:2–6 have a similar structure and language and the first mentioned passage uses and reformulates Exod 21:2–6 (Bergsma 2007, 134).

50 See von Rad (1964); Lemche (1984); Levinson (2006).

slaves go free (vv. 12, 17b). The rules are the same for male and female regarding their work for a fixed period of time in order to be released (Baker 2009, 144). That fact reveals that something has been changed in the society regarding the status of women during the time when the Deuteronomic laws were written. However, it does not mention marriage. It is most likely that women had the right to sell and buy, i.e. to engage in business without the control of a man. They had opportunity to own and to lose their property (cf. 2 Kgs 8:3). A female slave in Deut 15:12–18 is not described as a concubine or a wife.

Even though D is silent regarding the slave's wives and children (compare Exod 21:3–4), it can be concluded that in D a wife and a male slave can be together with their children and when a slave is freed in the seventh-year, his or her family shall go together. The permanent slave in Exodus is motivated to stay in that position when his wife and children must stay in the household of their creditor. However, in Deuteronomy a slave's wife and children leave with him and he has greater material security (v. 16).

Deut 15 does not mention the marital status of slaves, whereas Exod 21:2–6 speaks about male slaves who are single or married without children. However, Lev 25 talks about the man who is a father (Chirichigno 1993, 352). Lev 25 is more concerned with a person who has a family. Contrarily to the rules for women in Exod 21 and Deut 15; Lev 25 does not speak about the Israelite's women or wife and her status in the creditor's house.

The later laws, such as in Lev 25:42, do not mention piercing for slaves because slavery was degradation of people who were created on the image of the Lord (Childs 1974, 469). Contrarily to Exod 21:6 and Deut 15:17, it is more likely that prohibition against piercing is an indirect proof that H abolishes the institution of slavery for the Israelites (Milgrom 2004, 304). Also, H underlines that the children of the released slave must be released too (Lev 25:41,54). In addition, H does not support permanent servitude because all the Israelite slaves must be released at last during the Jubilee year (Lev 25:40). Exodus and Deuteronomy are concerned with the regulations for temporary slavery but Leviticus bans slavery between the Israelites. In Leviticus the chattel-slavery was abolished and the debt-slavery became work for a salary (Milgrom 2001, 2213).

In Exodus and Deuteronomy a slave needs to serve for six years and in Lev 25:39b the impoverished brother dwells like a hired worker or resident labourer under the employment of his creditor. Lev 25:36–37 refers to interest on loans of money. The rule specifies the poor because they most often need loans. The intention of the laws regarding loans and interest is to prevent the exploitation of the poor, i.e. these laws are concerned with the relief of poverty caused by

suffering (Baker 2009, 262). However, the law in Lev 25:44–46 allows foreigners to be slaves for life (vv. 44–46).

A person, i.e. a bonded labourer (vv. 39–40, 53) gets a place to live and does his job until his ancestral land is returned to him in the year of Jubilee. Probably, a bonded labourer is entitled to some rights based on a contract, such as: fixed working hours, housing, clothing and food. Service for bonded labourers is not the same as the service for temporary slaves. Lev 25 is more concerned with a way of providing for the needy poor people until their land is returned to them. When a person regains his freedom in the year of Jubilee, that person does not need the gift of his master because he returns to his own land (vv. 44, 54) (Baker 2009, 172).

Deut 15 adds that newly freed slaves should receive a gift from their ex-masters in order to be independent and ready for the new beginning. Deuteronomy underlines the importance of remembering the Israelites' deliverance from the slavery in the land of Egypt. The Israelites are obligated to give to the poor because the Lord has blessed them. Here we may find similarity with Lev 25:41–43 but also some differences. In Deuteronomy, the importance of active remembrance of their own delivery from the slavery in Egypt is connected with the generosity toward the poor and enslaved people. The Israelites shall treat the poor and needy in their society at the same way as the Lord generously treated them in Egypt. However, in Lev 25 the reference to Egypt is connected with the question of slavery. The Israelites are the Lord's slaves whom he brought out from the land of Egypt. Thus, the Israelites cannot be sold as slaves to anybody else. The Lord is an exclusive owner of the land and his people (Lev 25:23, 42, 55). That characteristic makes the Israelites eligible for sanctity. Sanctification of the Israelites is a major thing for H. That means that no other race, tribe, nation, can be a master of the Lord's people.

Lev 25 has almost completely different legislation than Exod 21:1–6 (7–11) and Deut 15. Release after six-year service has gone and has been replaced by a universal year of freedom every Jubilee year (Nihan 2004, 81–122). According to Lev 25, all agricultural land needs to lie fallow in the year of Jubilee, which is not the case in Exodus. That means that the legislation of Lev 25 has become a universal and cyclical law (Westbrook 1991, 51–52). The law of seventh-year release of slaves in Exodus is replaced by a fifty-year release in Leviticus. The law of fallow in Exodus is not mentioned in Deuteronomy but it can be found in Leviticus whereas Leviticus reformulates this law by adding the fifty-year fallow legislation.⁵¹ The law of slaves release in Exodus is reformulated in

51 Bergsma proposes that Deuteronomy contains a degree of urbanisation and centralisation

Deuteronomy but in Leviticus is mentioned only as a fifty-year cycle. We may conclude that the Leviticus laws reformulated and reformed the older laws.

Sometimes six-year servitude was impractical and not applicable mainly because of high debts and interests, bad agricultural year, illness, famine, etc. The intention of the Jubilee laws was to prolong the years of servitude. But, all labourers needed to be treated with kindness by their masters. The Jubilee laws brought a national, fixed program instead of an unfixed and individual program applied to each slave and his or her seven-year period of servitude (Milgrom 2001, 2257). However, many workers and bonded labourers (cf. Lev 25) could not reach the year of Jubilee because of their short lifespan.

Certainly, all of these distinct laws gave a better protection for the Israelites from becoming permanent slaves, i.e. slaves for life (Hartley 1992, 433). Both the Sabbatical year and the Jubilee year describe the agricultural society in Israel. They provide regulations in order to stabilise social and economic gaps in the society.

3.1 *Conclusion Regarding the Relations between the Laws on Slavery, Bonded and Hired Workers in the Book of Covenant, the Deuteronomic Laws and the Holiness Code*

We may conclude that the laws concerning slavery, bonded and hired workers in CC, D and H have some similarities but the legislations in H, concretely in Lev 25, are quite different from those described in Exod 21 and Deut 15. The seventh year legislations in Exod 21 and Deut 15 are focused on the release of slaves. Exod 21:1–6, 7–11 have two different regulations, one being concerned with male slaves, the other with the regulations for females. However, Deut 15 combines the same rules for both male and female and their work and release. The slaves are encouraged to stay in the position of slave in Exod 21 whereas Deut 15 motivates slaves to be free and socio-economically independent. In

of government of an urban, monarchical society, which is not a case in Lev 25 and H. He gives several ambiguous suggestions for that: ten pericopes regarding cities are mentioned in Deuteronomy. Cities in H are an exception; H does not mention a king or government office while D makes allowances for a king (Deut 17:14–20); the population lives in walled cities and the city gate was the place of the court; D has a judicial system of judges (Deut 16:18–19) and a central judiciary (Deut 17:8–13); D limits the power of the paterfamilias by state authority; D mentions civil-social, state ordinances, etc. He argues about the moves from agrarian (H) to urban society (D). Also some other studies interpret Lev 25 as prior to or independent of Deut 15. See e.g. Japhet (1986, 63–89); Chirichigno (1993, 342–343); Joosten (1996, 151–161); Schenker (1998, 23–41).

order to become socio-economically secure, the newly freed slave needs to receive support from his or her ex-master. The Israelites must remain aware of their miraculous deliverance from the Egyptian slavery and the subsequent obligation on them to help and deliver people from their poverty.

Only H does not mention piercing, which can be an indicator that H abolishes the institution of slavery for the Israelites. Furthermore, H does not encourage permanent servitude because of the institution of Jubilee when all Israelite servants must be free (e.g. Lev 25:40). H does not support slavery between the Israelites while CC and D are concerned with the rules for temporary slavery. The chattel-slavery is abolished while the debt slavery becomes a labour for income in H. Bonded labourers in Lev 25:39–40, 53 have an opportunity to live and do their job until their parcels of land are returned to them in the year of Jubilee. Also, Lev 25 is concerned with the issue of providing for the poor until their piece of land, which was the main resource for living, is returned to them. In the year of Jubilee, enslaved people are released and ready to return back to their own land (Lev 25:44, 54).

In Lev 25, the notion regarding the memory of deliverance from the slavery in Egypt is closely connected with the issue of slavery. The Israelites can be only the Lord's slaves whom he brought out from the land of Egypt. The Lord is the only owner of the land and his people. The land cannot be sold in perpetuity in the same way as the Israelites cannot be sold as slaves to anybody else. The Lord is their only master.

Furthermore, Lev 25 brings a completely new legislation regarding the release of slaves and bonded workers. The year of Jubilee has replaced the regulations concerning the release after six years of service. Six years of service is prolonged to the maximum of fifty years of servitude. However, all workers must be treated with kindness by their masters. The Jubilee legislation brings a fixed, universal program, which replaces an unfixed and individual system applied to each slave individually and his or her seven year period of service. The law of fallow, which is mentioned in CC, is reformulated in Leviticus 25 by adding the fifty-year fallow legislation. The Sabbatical year and the Jubilee year describe the agricultural society in Israel that provides the regulations in order to bring socio-economic stabilisation in the community.

4 The Holiness Code and Leviticus 25

The dating of H and Lev 25 continues to be a matter of debate among scholars. Determination of the historical background and origin of H and Lev 25 is very difficult. Thus, about their historical origins scholars differ from a date CC.

1200 B.C.E. to c. 440 B.C.E. (Bergsma 2007, 16). This section contains the brief survey of the scholars' main claims regarding the dating of H and Lev 25.

- a) **The period of settlement.**⁵² North prefers the period of occupation or the settlement period for the origin of H and the Jubilee legislation in Lev 25 (North 1954, 45, 204–206).⁵³ Also, for example Joosten agrees with the period of settlement based on his notification that Lev 25 does not mention an urban lifestyle but only speaks about the people in the pre-state period who were rural and agrarian people (Joosten 1996, 157).

Bergsma argues that the institution of the Jubilee fits comfortably within pre-exilic time of the tribal period.⁵⁴

- b) **The period of pre-exilic time.** Kaufmann was the first person who argued that H has a pre-exilic, pre-monarchic origin. However, he says that there is no direct evidence in the Old Testament regarding the observance of the Sabbatical year before the exile.⁵⁵

Neufeld has produced a study arguing that the Jubilee had its roots in the tribal period but was also known during the monarchy. That was

52 E.g. Porter (1976, 197–205); Wachholder (1976, 762–763); Japhet (1986, 80–89); Hartley (1992, 427–428). Some scholars prefer an early date with allowance for later redactional modifications. See e.g. Blosser (1979, 42–94); Gnuse (1985a, 43–48); Alt (1989, 80–132); Weinfeld (1990, 59–61). E.g. Blosser argues that the legislation of Lev 25 arose at the time of the occupation of the land in the 12th century B.C.E. conquest and was adjusted after the exile. He sees allusions to the Jubilee in Jer 32; 34:8–22; 1 Kgs 21; Is 5:8; 29:18–20; 35:5–10; 42:1–7; 49:8–13; 58:5–9; 61:1–2; 63:4–6; Ezek 7:12–13; 11:15–21; 1 Chr 36:21 and Dan 9:24–27. Blosser uses the term 'Jubilee' very often. So, for him any reference to the themes of release and freedom means references to the message of Jubilee (Blosser 1979, 42–94).

53 North discussed that the Jubilee was a very important legislation produced by an authority who rearranged older Semitic legislations indicated for a one-time proclamation forty-nine years after the initial Israelite settlement of Canaan. This legislation continued to be copied after that time in Israelite legislations as a reminder of its legal and socio-economic teachings (North 1954).

54 Bergsma makes the conclusion that the institution of the Jubilee was established in the pre-exilic, tribal period based on five considerations:

1. The priority of Lev 25 to the Book of Ezekiel
2. The similarities between the Jubilee law and ANE law from the second millennium
3. The ancient terms in Lev 25
4. The congruence of the Jubilee with contemporary reconstructions of early tribal Israel
5. The ancient and tribal roots of the Jubilee (Bergsma 2007, 56–75).

55 Kaufmann (1960). See also Lohfink (1986, 216–225).

some kind of a priestly reaction on the urban monarchic regime. The Jubilee was revived in the monarchic period to restore old legislation during the urban economy, which caused many socio-economic problems, unemployment and extreme poverty (Neufeld 1958, 53–124). Also, Knohl has suggested that H, especially Lev 25, was the creation of the Holiness School in the eighth century (Knohl 1995, 104). Milgrom also attributes H to one generation of the priestly scribes in the eighth century B.C.E. but the final redaction of H was finished in the exilic or early postexilic period by the work of a single redactor, i.e. a final editor of the Pentateuch (Milgrom 2000, 1439–1443). Through their comparison of the parallel laws found in P and H, both authors consider that H is later than P but Milgrom opposes Knohl's idea that cult and ethics are separated in P. Moreover, for Milgrom the connections between cult and ethics are more obvious in H (Knohl 1995, 13–42, ch. 3; Milgrom 2000, 1319–1443).

- c) **The period of exile and post-exile.** Wellhausen noticed that H and Lev 25 as well as Deut 15 was written during or after the Babylonian exile and Deut 15 was composed in the time of Josiah and it is older than Lev 25.⁵⁶

Ringe interprets Lev 25 as the work of a priestly editor in the exilic or post-exilic period. She concludes that Lev 25 is most likely contemporaneous with Is 61:1–2; Neh 5:1–14; 10:31.⁵⁷ She also considers Ps 146 as a 'liturgical celebration' of Jubilee originating from the same period in Israel's history as Lev 25 and Is 61 (Ringe 1981, 42, 70–71).

Regarding the exilic or post-exilic dating,⁵⁸ for example, Grabbe argues that the Priestly source is concerned with the situation in the Second Temple. If P/H is dated to the exilic period, then it is a theocratic programme for a renewed life in the land (Grabbe 1993, 22)

Von Rad uses the methods of form criticism and tradition history analysis to demonstrate that traditions of oral transmission, gradual inscription and editorial activity lay behind P/H source. For him, the composition of

⁵⁶ Wellhausen (2009).

⁵⁷ See also Kilian (1963); Noth (1965).

⁵⁸ E.g. Fager has argued that Lev 25 must be a product of the post-exilic time, in part, but not exclusively, an attempt by the priests to get back the lands belonging to former exiles (Fager 1993, 60–63). Ringe follows the conclusions of Kilian, Noth, and others that Lev 25 is the work of a priestly editor in the exilic or post-exilic time, drawing on earlier legislations Exod 21:1–7; 23:10–11 and Deut 15:1–17. They argue that Lev 25 is approximately contemporaneous with Is 61:1–2 and Neh 5:1–13; 10:31 (Ringe 1981, 42–69). See also Ringe (1985); Amit (1992); Grabbe (1993); Habel (1995); Gottwald (1997).

P/H happened in the exilic/post-exilic period as well but the author of P/H is an editor rather than the writer of the P/H source.⁵⁹

- d) **The Persian period.**⁶⁰ According to Nihan the final editor of the Pentateuch created H, which is post-D and post-P, in order to harmonise the earlier laws (the Decalogue, CC, D), i.e. H supplements, reinterprets and revises all other earlier Pentateuchal laws. A 'pentateuchal redactor' created the Torah's composition during the Persian period (Otto 1994, 233–256; Nihan 2007, 616). Because of the final work of a pentateuchal redactor they identify a coherent structure of H.

Nihan goes against the views of scholars who have claimed that P is composed before the Persian period; for him the Priestly source was established in the fifth century B.C.E. H is the conclusion to the entire Sinaitic revelation and it is a part of the Holiness School or the Priestly Scribal School from the late fifth century B.C.E. (Nihan 2007, 559–564, 616).

4.1 *Leviticus 25*

Lev 25 is a coherent chapter. It has a formal introduction 'the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying' (v. 1) and the conclusion 'I am the Lord your God' (v. 55b).⁶¹ It is obvious that this chapter is a self-contained unit. The chapter has several chiasms.⁶² The text uses the second person plural,⁶³ the second person singular⁶⁴ and neutral third person⁶⁵ (Hartley 1992, 425; Gerstenberger 1993, 372–373).

59 Von Rad (1966).

60 See e.g. Lefebvre (2003). For Lefebvre, Lev 25 has a thematic similarity to the narrative of Neh 5. Thus, he concludes that the Persian period is the time of origin of the Jubilee, which is for him largely utopian legislation. Furthermore, Lefebvre discusses whether the Jubilee was the forty-ninth or fiftieth year. He argues about whether the Jubilee was ever practiced and about its relationship with the slave laws of Exod 21; Deut 15. Also Gerstenberger underlines that Leviticus was conceived and composed in the Persian period by the priest or the school of priests (Gerstenberger 1996).

61 About ritual words and narrative worlds, i.e. literary criticism and ritual studies in the book of Leviticus see e.g. Bibb (2009).

62 Many parts of the speeches are arranged as chiasms. E.g. parallel chiasms in 25:6–7; 25:9; 25:10b–13; 25:14–17; 25:37; 25:38 and 25:50–53 (Milgrom 2001, 2159, 2163, 2170, 2176–2177, 2211–2212, 2234).

63 Vv. 2, 9b–13, 14b, 17–24, 38, 44b, 45, 46a, 55b.

64 Vv. 3–5, 6–7, 8–9a, 14a, 15–16, 17b, 25, 35–37, 39–40, 43–44a, 46b, 47, 53b.

65 Vv. 26–34, 41–42, 48–54.

Lev 25 has three main parts: introduction, the regulations regarding the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee. Legislations concerning the Sabbath year, the year of Jubilee and the institution of redemption are three interrelated institutions that are important for the life of society. Leviticus 25 has different narrative content than other books of Pentateuch, e.g. the theme of Jubilee. One of the main statements of Lev 25 is: the Lord is the exclusive owner of the land (v. 23) and the Israelites (v. 55). Its emphasis is on the relationship between the Lord, land and people.

It is obvious that determination of the historical background and origin of the Jubilee legislation⁶⁶ is very difficult. It is most likely, according to von Rad, i.e. after the traditions of oral transmission, gradual inscription and editorial activity, that Lev 25 contains its materials from different periods of time.⁶⁷

... there may be a distinction between the date of the referent of the text and the date of the text itself. In the case of Lev 25, the referent is the institution of the Jubilee—which may have been in existence before the text of Lev 25 was composed. Second, a text may undergo development. An old biblical text—stemming from pre-monarchic time, for example—may undergo successive updating and revisions all the way into the post-exilic period. Thus, for such a text one cannot speak of a single “date” of the text, but only “dates” of the successive layers. Finally, a given text is usually found within a context, which may or may not date from the same period as the text.

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4.2 *Composition of the Structure*

Most scholars have different approaches and interpretations regarding the development of Lev 25,⁶⁸ i.e. the identification of its literary strata.⁶⁹ For exam-

66 In the Pentateuch, the Jubilee is mentioned also in Lev 27:17, 18, 23, 24 and Num 36:4.

67 Most scholars agree that the priestly literature got its final form over a certain period of time. Thus, it is not possible to assign all priestly writing to only one single period of time.

68 Most scholars identify a sixfold structure consisting of Lev 1–7; 8–10; 11–15; 16; 17–26; 27. E.g. Childs and Gorman have also identified the structure: 1–7 chapters deal with the sacrificial system; 8–10 chapters with the inaugural service; 11–16 chapters with the laws of impurities, and 17–26 chapters with the laws of holiness. Chapter 27 is an appendix on various gifts to the sanctuary (Childs 182, 1979; Gorman 1997, 2–3). Wenham and Watts identify a fourfold division, consisting of Lev 1–7; 8–10; 11–16; 17–26 (Wenham 1979, 4; Watts 1995, 16–17). However, Balentine identifies five major sections of Leviticus 1–7; 8–10; 11–15; 16; 17–27 (Balentine 2002).

69 The rejection of the traditional ways of organising the text of Leviticus reveals some

ple, Elliger notices eight different parts in Lev 25 (Elliger 1966, 347–349). Kilian sees four chronological stages of development (Kilian 1963, 130 ff.). Noth argues that Lev 25 has been composed from several different materials but it is not possible to identify stages of development (Noth 1977, 181–193). Furthermore, Fager finds five different layers: an independent Sabbath law, a debt-sale law, a redaction of the Jubilee law, an initial priestly redaction and a later priestly redaction (Fager 1993, 123–125). Despite all these mentioned interpretations it must be concluded that Lev 25 has at least three different stages and interpolation. These stages and interpretation are:

1. Stage: The Sabbath year (25:1–7)
2. Stage: The Jubilee year (25:8–17)
 - 2.1 Interpolation: the Sabbath year (25:18–22)
3. Stage: The institution of redemption (Lev 25:24–55) (v. 23 is connected with the question of Jubilee)

new original suggestions for the structure of Leviticus. E.g. Douglas brings completely new approach regarding the issue. She proposes understanding the book of Leviticus as belonging to the genre of 'ring composition', similar to the Greek classical poetry. In a ring composition, the coherence, structural and thematic unity of a literary work, are closely connected with the continuous resumption and development of a theme. This is underlined by some kind of parallelism between the introduction and the conclusion. For Douglas, chs. 1–7 are echoed by ch. 23, i.e. ch. 23 corresponds to the beginning of the book's conclusion. The central chapter of the book is ch. 19, which is framed by two parallel texts in chs. 18 and 20. For her, this artistic scheme highlights the centrality of Lev 19 within the whole book. Ch. 19 discloses the deep meaning of Leviticus as a whole. Lev 19 is parallel to ch. 26 and they are major structural divisions. The first section, chs. 1–17, is echoed by chs. 21–25. Chs. 21–22 parallel chs. 8–10 and 11–17, while chs. 23–25 correspond to Lev 1–7. According to Douglas, this structure of the book of Leviticus corresponds to the structure of its main theme, which is the Tabernacle. This kind of reading Leviticus offers a spiritual pilgrimage to the sanctuary. In accordance with Douglas' ring structure and structural correspondence between text and tabernacle, the narratives are located at the points where a reader would encounter the tabernacle. According to the tripartite division of the tabernacle: Lev 1:1–17:16 deals with the matters pertaining to the court of sacrifice; Lev 18:1–24:9 contains instructions concerning persons permitted in (Lev 21:1–22:16), and items designated for (Lev 24:1–9), the outer portion of the tent containing the incense altar; and Lev 25:1–27:34 concerns the redemption of items belonging to the resident of the holiest portion of the tabernacle. So, in reading through the book of Leviticus, a reader proceeds toward the inner parts of the tabernacle (Douglas 1995; 2001; 2001a; 2004).

The first stage speaks about the Sabbath year in vv. 1–7 and also vv. 18–22. Vv. 18–22 go back to the Sabbath year from v. 7 and bring further legislation about Sabbath year adding some teaching to it. The main part of the chapter speaks about the Jubilee year in vv. 8–17 (23). The last and the biggest part of the chapter speaks about the institution of redemption with some exceptions in vv. 29–31, 32–34 and 44–46. Some scholars see that part as an integral part of the institution of the Jubilee year (Hartley 1992, 425). However, it is most likely that this part is a later appendix to the institution of the Jubilee year. For example, if the institution of redemption was not practiced in a concrete situation only then the Jubilee year would be applied. Without these interpolations, the section regarding the Jubilee year would include only verses 8–17 (23).

4.3 *Exegetical Interpretation of Leviticus 25*

4.3.1 The Sabbath Year (Vv. 1–7)

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּהַר סִינַי לֵאמֹר: 1
 דִּבֹּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי תָבֹאוּ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם וְשָׁבְתָהּ 2
 הָאָרֶץ שְׁבֹת לַיהוָה:
 שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְרַע שְׂדֶךְ וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים תִּזְמַר כְּרֶמְךָ וְאָסַפְתָּ אֶת־תְּבוּאָתָהּ: 3
 וּבִשְׁנֵה הַשְּׁבִיעִית שְׁבֹת שְׁבֹתוֹן יִהְיֶה לָאָרֶץ שְׁבֹת לַיהוָה שְׂדֶךְ לֹא תִזְרַע וְכְרֶמְךָ לֹא 4
 תִּזְמַר:
 אֵת סַפִּיחַ קְצִירְךָ לֹא תִקְצֹר וְאֶת־עֲנָבֶיךָ לֹא תִבְצֹר שְׁנַת שְׁבֹתוֹן יִהְיֶה לָאָרֶץ: 5
 וְהִיתָה שְׁבֹת הָאָרֶץ לָכֶם לֶאֱכֹלָה לָךְ וּלְעַבְדְּךָ וּלְאִמָּתְךָ וּלְתוֹשֶׁבֶת הָנָגֶרִים 6
 עִמָּךְ:
 וּלְבְהֶמְתְּךָ וּלְחִיָּה אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרְצְךָ תִּהְיֶה כָל־תְּבוּאָתָהּ לְאָכָל: 7

- 1 the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying:
- 2 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a Sabbath for the Lord.
- 3 Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield;
- 4 but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for the land, a Sabbath for the Lord: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard.
- 5 You shall not reap the aftergrowth of your harvest or gather the grapes of your unpruned vine: it shall be a year of complete rest for the land.
- 6 You may eat what the land yields during its Sabbath—you, your male and female slaves, your hired and your bound labourers who live with you;
- 7 for your livestock also, and for the wild animals in your land all its yield shall be for food.

This section begins with the introduction (vv. 1–2a)⁷⁰ that the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai.⁷¹ The legislation about the Sabbath year may be found in vv. 2b–7. “The land shall observe a Sabbath for the Lord” (v. 2b). After the six years of agricultural work, the seventh year shall be complete rest for the land, i.e. a Sabbath for the Lord.⁷² Exod 23:11 says that a farmer shall let his ‘land’ or ‘field’ rest and lie fallow, whereas Lev 25:2 states that the entire land shall observe Sabbath. According to Exodus, each farmer determines his seventh year for the land rest while in Lev 25 the Sabbath year is fixed for the entire land (Chirichigno 1993, 310–311). Also, in Lev 25:3–4 the keeping of the Sabbath year is described very like the observance of the Sabbath day in Lev 23:3 (Bergsma 2007, 86).

Outside of Leviticus 25–26, the noun שַׁבָּת never refers to a time period other than a single day. It is normally the seventh day of every week (cf. Gen 2:2; Exod 20:10; Deut 5:14). Infrequently, a special festal day is referred to as a שַׁבָּת שְׁבִתוֹן (Lev 16:31; 23:24, 32, 39). Three times the regular seventh-day Sabbath is called a שַׁבָּת שְׁבִתוֹן (Exod 31:15; 35:2; Lev 23:3). The association of Sabbath with an entire year, as described in Lev 25, is thus a notable exception to typical Sabbath conceptions.

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H introduces an innovation in the Sabbath ideology by creating the seventh year as a Sabbath. The Hebrew phrase שַׁבָּת שְׁבִתוֹן in v. 4 occurs also in Exod 16:23; 31:15; 35:2; 37:15; Lev 16:31; 23:3, 24, 32, 39; 25:5. *Šabatōn* is connected with all festivals when labour is forbidden. The Lord’s work and rest should be imitated by his people in order to sustain the Lord’s world, which is ordered to be ‘very good’ (cf. Gen 1:31). Keeping the Sabbath day means also taking care for the Lord’s creation and participation in the rhythm of his creation. The Sabbath year emphasises that the land and people on the land belong to the Lord. He is their owner. Through the appreciation for the land during the seventh year the people show also honour and respect to the Lord. Just as the Lord sanctifies the Sabbath of creation (Gen 2:3), he sanctifies the Sabbath year too (Milgrom

70 The opening of Lev 25:1 is identical with the end of Lev 26:46. See also Hartley (1992, 418); North (2000, 101–114).

71 Mount Sinai is mentioned also in Lev 7:38; 26:46; 27:34.

72 The concept of the land resting may be found in two chapters of the book of Leviticus 25:2, 4, 6; 26:34, 35. The phrase ‘a Sabbath to/for the Lord’ may be found in Exod 16:25; 20:10; 31:15; Deut 5:15.

2001, 2153). According to Lev 25, the whole land needs to have rest in order that the land shows its holiness through Sabbath rest (Stackert 2007, 120).

Vv. 3–5 reflect the old regulation in Exod 23:10–11 where reaping, harvesting or gathering were forbidden. However, vv. 6–7 allow people to glean in the field and to eat what the land yields during its Sabbath, i.e. all yields are for food. Vv. 3–5 forbid harvest during the Sabbath year while vv. 6–7 allow the landowner and his household, even the wild animals to benefit from the after growth⁷³ during its Sabbath. Vv. 6–7 modify vv. 3–5⁷⁴ and show H's innovation regarding CC (Bailey 2005, 300–301). However, Milgrom says that Lev 25 is a corrective to Exod 23, not its supplement (Milgrom 2001, 2160).

The list of those who may collect the land yields or who may gather what grows naturally during the Sabbath year is expanded in Lev 25:6⁷⁵ beyond the list in Exod 23:11. The list in vv. 6–7 include an owner, his male and female slaves, hired and bound labourers, livestock and wild animals. Even though the poor are not included in vv. 6–7, H states that the Sabbath and other occasions provide for the poor as well (e.g. 19:9–10; 23:22). It is probable that the needy and the poor were somehow connected with specific households. All households were allowed to benefit from the seventh year growth.⁷⁶

It is possible that Lev 25:2–7, not only respond to Exod 23:10–11 but also to Deut 15. H replaces the Hebrew word שְׁמֵטָה (cf. Deut 15:1, 2, 3, 9) with שְׁבֵת i.e. transforms שְׁמֵטָה into a שְׁבֵתוֹן. Thus, H brings a new, agricultural notion with the Sabbath ideology. According to Stackert, H invents an equivalent phrase, i.e. instead of שְׁנַת־הַשְּׁמֵטָה שְׁנַת־הַשְּׁבֵת in Deut 15:9, H invents a similar phrase order to correspond with his unique way to the seventh year, שְׁבֵת שְׁבֵתוֹן יְהִיָּה

73 The Hebrew word קִפְיָה 'aftergrowth' in v. 5 refers to what grows naturally. Maimonides says that the seed which grows a second time is called *safiah* and the seeds which grows a third time after reaping is called *shahis* (cf. Is 37:30) (Mishnah Kilayim 2:5 in Levine 1989, 170–171).

74 The relation between vv. 5 and 6–7 are examined by some scholars. However, the relationship between vv. 4–6 and vv. 20–22 should be seen as complementary (Nihan 2007, 522–523).

75 Houten considers the alien along with the temporary resident in Lev 25:6, 23, 35, 45; Num 35:15, with the poor in Lev 19:10; 23:22, and with the native or the Israelite in Lev 16:29; 17:8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15; 18:26; 19:33, 34; 20:2; 22:18; 24:16, 22; Num 15:13, 14, 26, 29, 30; 19:10 (Houten 1991, 121).

76 "The beneficiaries of the sabbatical year get a specific new sense in Leviticus: the family ... The list of the beneficiaries of the sabbatical year law in Lev 25:6–7 includes foreigners unlike the fallow year law in Exod 23:10–11 and the debt-release law in Deut 15:1–11 ... The family is not merely a socially and economically basic unit in the Israelite society, but an executing agent that realises the divine creation order on the land." (Kim 2011, 78, 80–81).

לָאָרֶץ (Lev 25:4a ‘there shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for the land’) and שָׁנַת שְׁבַתוֹן יִהְיֶה לָאָרֶץ (Lev 25:5b it shall be a year of complete rest for the land) (Stackert 2007, 120–122).

Although it is not possible to discern the time when and how a rest period for the land in every seventh year came about in Israel but the law of the Sabbatical year in Lev 25 is an expansion and modification of the fallow year institution of Exod 23:10–11 and the release year institution of Deut 15.

4.3.2 The Year of Jubilee (Vv. 8–17)

8 וּסְפַרְתָּ לְךָ שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים וְהָיוּ לְךָ יָמֵי שִׁבְעַת שָׁבָתוֹת
הַשָּׁנִים תִּשְׁעָה וָאַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה:
9 וְהִעֲבַרְתָּ שׁוֹפָר תְּרוּעָה בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בַּעֲשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ בְּיוֹם הַכַּפָּרִים תִּעְבְּרֻוּ שׁוֹפָר
בְּכָל־אַרְצְכֶם:
10 וּקְדַשְׁתֶּם אֶת שָׁנַת הַחֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה וּקְרַאתֶם דְּרוֹר בָּאָרֶץ לְכָל־יֹשְׁבֵיהָ יוֹבֵל הוּא
תִּהְיֶה לָכֶם וּשְׁבַתְּם אִישׁ אֶל־אֲחֻזָּתוֹ וְאִישׁ אֶל־מִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ תָּשֻׁבוּ:
11 יוֹבֵל הוּא שָׁנַת הַחֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה תִּהְיֶה לָכֶם לֹא תִזְרְעוּ וְלֹא תִקְצְרוּ אֶת־סִפְחֶיהָ וְלֹא
תִבְצְרוּ אֶת־גִּזְרֶיהָ:
12 כִּי יוֹבֵל הוּא קֹדֶשׁ תִּהְיֶה לָכֶם מִן־הַשָּׁדָה תֹּאכְלוּ אֶת־תְּבוּאָתָהּ:
13 בַּשָּׁנָה הַיּוֹבֵל הַזֹּאת תָּשֻׁבוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אֲחֻזָּתוֹ:
14 וְכִי־תִמְכְּרוּ מִמֶּכֶר לְעַמִּיתְךָ אִו קָנָה מִיַּד עַמִּיתְךָ אֶל־תּוֹנוּ אִישׁ אֶת־אֲחִיו:
15 בְּמִסְפַּר שָׁנִים אַחֵר הַיּוֹבֵל תִּקְנֶה מֵאֵת עַמִּיתְךָ בְּמִסְפַּר שְׁנֵי־תְבוּאֹת יִמְכְּרֶלָּךְ:
16 לְפִי רֹב הַשָּׁנִים תִּרְבֶּה מִקְנָתוֹ וּלְפִי מְעוֹט הַשָּׁנִים תִּמְעִיט מִקְנָתוֹ כִּי מִסְפַּר תְּבוּאֹת
הוּא מִכָּר לָךְ:
17 וְלֹא תוֹנוּ אִישׁ אֶת־עַמִּיתוֹ וְיִרְאֵת מֵאֲלֵהֶיךָ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

- 8 You shall count off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-nine years.
- 9 Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month—on the Day of Atonement—you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land.
- 10 And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family.
- 11 That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, or reap the aftergrowth, or harvest the unpruned vines.
- 12 For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you: you shall eat only what the field itself produces.
- 13 In this year of jubilee you shall return, every one of you, to your property.

- 14 When you make a sale to your neighbour or buy from your neighbour, you shall not cheat one another.
- 15 When you buy from your neighbour, you shall pay only for the number of years since the jubilee; the seller shall charge you only for the remaining crop years.
- 16 If the years are more, you shall increase the price, and if the years are fewer, you shall diminish the price; for it is a certain number of harvests that are being sold to you.
- 17 You shall not cheat one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the Lord your God.

The Jubilee year is connected with the seventh Sabbath year,⁷⁷ i.e. the dating of Jubilee year is determined by counting off seven weeks of years (Lev 25:8).⁷⁸ During the Sabbath year the land shall rest, which is connected with the Sabbath day, a day that is set apart from the other days as a day of complete rest (Gen 2:2–3). With the sound of a ram's horn on the tenth day of the seventh month⁷⁹ every fifty year i.e. on the Day of Atonement, it was the Jubilee year.⁸⁰ The focus of the apparent calendar in Lev 25 followed the agricultural calendar whose year began in autumn⁸¹ (Kleinig 2003, 538). After purgation

77 Kiuchi proposes that the year of Jubilee should not be taken as a year that comes every fifty years. For him, the year of Jubilee is the culminating year of the preceding sabbatical years, beginning with the keeping of a weekly Sabbath (Kiuchi 2007, 455).

78 For some scholars the Jubilee is the seventh sabbatical year because there is not possibility to have two successive fallow years. E.g. Noth (1962, 186–187); Elliger (1966, 352); Kaufman (1984, 278); Hartley (1992, 434–436); Chirichigno (1993, 320); Nihan (2007, 520).

79 The first month of the year was in the spring (mid-March) and the seventh month was in the autumn (September–October) (Balentine 2002, 172). The autumnal calendar may be also found in Exod 23 and 34. However, the calendars of Lev 23, Num 28–29, Deut 16 were the spring calendars that represent the cultic and civil year (Milgrom 2001, 2012).

80 Baker argues that the fiftieth year can be an intercalary 'year' inserted in the calendar in order to harmonise the lunar year with the solar year. In that case, its length is forty-nine days. This can be comparable to the additional day inserted every leap year in the Julian calendar. Baker underlines that this interpretation can be supported by the fact that the Jubilee does not begin at the beginning of the year but on the tenth day of the seventh month (Baker 2009, 82).

81 It seems that the years in Lev 25 are cultic-agricultural years, fall-to-fall years. The Israelite civil year began with Nisan, first month while the cultic agricultural year with Tishri, seventh month. The prohibitions on agricultural work are phrased as "you shall not sow ... nor reap," which infers a fall, time for sowing to spring, time for reaping year (Lev 25:4–5, 11, 20, 22) (Bergsma 2007, 88).

of the sanctuary and repentance of the people on the Day of Atonement (cf. chapter 16) the Jubilee year could be initiated.

V. 9 uses two times the Hebrew word שׁוֹפָר, which means ‘horn trumpet’. It is most likely that the trumpet was made from the horn of an animal.⁸² The Hebrew term יוֹבֵל⁸³ is mentioned in Lev 25:10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 28 two times, 30, 31, 33, 40, 50, 52, 54.⁸⁴ The sound of a horn was a signal of liberty for the inauguration of that holy occasion, i.e. the celebration of the holy year of Jubilee was announced. It is most likely that this term refers to the instrument by which the celebration was announced.⁸⁵

The Hebrew word דִּרְוֹר⁸⁶ (liberty, emancipation, release, freedom) in Lev 25:10⁸⁷ indicates the return of every Israelite to his possession of the land and release of all debts (Nihan 2007, 527). The Jubilee year means that the ancestral property will be returned back to the original possessor of that land. It means that each person will return to his ancestral property and his debt will be cancelled as well. Freedom from bondage or debt and restoration of the family and property are the main purpose of the institution of Jubilee year.

V. 11 says that during the Jubilee year sowing, reaping or harvesting are forbidden because that is a holy occasion. Any field work is prohibited. However, v. 12 says that the after growth may be taken directly from the field. It is not allowed to store somewhere the after growth. The rule ‘it is a Jubilee; it shall be holy to you’ (v. 12a) is similar with the rule regarding the observance of the Sabbath year ‘there shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for the land, a Sabbath for the Lord’ (v. 4a). Even though the Jubilee year is not called a ‘Sabbath’ or ‘super Sabbatical’, it was a sacred year. The Israelites are called to keep the Sabbath day holy by abstaining from all labour, so they are called to sanctify the Jubilee year

82 In the Hebrew Bible, the word שׁוֹפָר is described as an instrument that serves to muster an army (Judg 3:27; 6:34), to proclaim victory (1 Sam 13:3), to conduct a battle (Judg 7:16, 18, 22; 2 Sam 18:16; 20:22; Jer 4:21; Hos 5:8), to bring the ark of the Lord (2 Sam 6:15), to crown kings (2 Sam 15:10; 2 Kgs 9:13), to proclaim the restoration of the exiles (Is 27:13). In the modern Israel, the sound of trumpet proclaims the beginning of Sabbaths before sunset on Friday and festivals (Milgrom 2001, 2164).

83 About the terminology see e.g. Baker (1998, 47–50).

84 Also Lev 27:17, 18, 21, 23, 24; Num 36:4.

85 For this see Exod 19:15 and Judges 6:4–6.

86 This word may be found also in Is 61:1; Jer 34:8, 15, 17 and Ezek 46:17. These verses may be connected with the notion of Jubilee year as well.

87 The LXX's translation of דִּרְוֹר in Lev 25:10 is ἄφεσις. When יוֹבֵל is mentioned σημασία comes in, strengthened by ἄφεσις to give its content. Σημασία in Num 10:5–7 means ‘a trumpet sound’. So Lev 25:15 uses this word alone which means a ‘proclamation or signal’. Later ἄφεσις alone is used. Also ἄφεσις is the word for מִשְׁפָּח in Deut 15.

too, i.e. they should not work on the land (Lev 25:11–12). H alludes that there is a connection between those sacred times.

The release of the land is connected with the release of debts in Lev 25 and the cessation of work required of the people is connected with the rest of the land.⁸⁸ One of the main focuses of Lev 25 is land release that is logically connected and interrelated with the debt-release (Milgrom 2001, 2176–2177).

In Lev 25 the Hebrew word *חֵקֶן* means 'possession' and this phrase is "fundamental to the religious conception of the land-holding as a divine grant found in both the Holiness Code and the Priestly Code" (Levinson 2005, 623). This word reveals specific theology of the land in Lev 25 and can be found in Lev 25:10, 13, 24, 25, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 41, 45, 46. The property was located in the land of Canaan. It cannot be only a conditional possession for the Israelites (Milgrom 2001, 2173) but also 'an everlasting possession', which the Lord promised to Abraham (Gen 17:8) (Baker 2009, 84–87). Certainly Lev 25 underlines the fact that the land is the Lord's possession.⁸⁹ Actually, the Lord's Promised Land is a gift to his people and it is some kind of criterion for the relationship between the Israelites and the Lord (cf. Lev 26).

Vv. 14–17 mention that any purchase must be done justly without oppression. People cannot sell or buy the land but only what they can buy and sell is usufruct of the land. Prices that sellers charge should be made according to the following Jubilee year. People buy only for the remaining crop-years. If the years are fewer according to the next Jubilee year, the price shall be diminished. They shall not cheat one another but they shall fear the Lord.

In vv. 14, 17, 35–37, 43, 46, 53 we find ethical issues.⁹⁰ Several times the people are advised not to cheat each other, not to rule with harshness, and not to take interest in advance or to make a profit from an impoverished person. These ethical rules are very similar with the rules in Lev 19:9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 34, 35.

88 2 Chron 36 refers to Jer 34:12–21 regarding the peoples' disregard of keeping the sabbatical year, which is mentioned in Lev 25:1–7. The people did not obey the word of the Lord, i.e. Sabbatical and Jubilee year were not kept, thus they needed to be sent to exile in order that the land gets its rest (Albertz 2003, 13).

89 This conception can be compared with the juridical conception prevailing in Mesopotamia. The king in Mesopotamia was an owner of all land in Mesopotamia. He was free to give an award of the land's usufruct to his people as a reward for their loyalty to him (Milgrom 2000, 2185).

90 Oppression of the weak is forbidden in Israel, whether of ethnic minorities (Exod 22:21; Lev 19:33; Jer 22:3), orphans and widows (Jer 22:3; Ezek 22:7), the poor and needy (Ezek 18:7, 12, 16; 22:29), neighbours (Lev 25:14, 17), or ordinary people (Ezek 45:18; 46:18) (Baker 2009, 133).

4.3.3 An Interpolation: The Sabbath Year (Vv. 18–22)

18 וְעִשְׂתֶּם אֶת־חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת־מִשְׁפָּטַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וְעִשְׂתֶּם אֹתָם וְיִשְׁבַּתֶּם עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְבֶטַח:
 19 וְנָתַנָּה הָאָרֶץ פְּרִיָּהּ וְאָכַלְתֶּם לְשָׂבַע וְיִשְׁבַּתֶּם לְבֶטַח עָלֶיהָ:
 20 וְכִי תֹאמְרוּ מִה־נֹּאכַל בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִת הִזֵּי לֹא נִזְרַע וְלֹא נֶאֱסַף אֶת־תְּבוּאָתָנוּ:
 21 וְצִוִּיתִי אֶת־בְּרַכְתִּי לָכֶם בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁשִׁית וְעִשְׂתֶּם אֶת־הַתְּבוּאָה לְשָׁלֹשׁ הַשָּׁנִים:
 22 וְזֶרַעְתֶּם אֶת הַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁמִינִית וְאָכַלְתֶּם מִז־הַתְּבוּאָה יָשֹׁן עַד הַשָּׁנָה הַתְּשִׁיעִת
 עַד־בּוֹא תְּבוּאָתָהּ תֹאכְלוּ יָשֹׁן:

- 18 You shall observe my statutes and faithfully keep my ordinances, so that you may live on the land securely.
- 19 The land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and live on it securely.
- 20 Should you ask, “What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather in our crop?”
- 21 I will order my blessing for you in the sixth year, so that it will yield a crop for three years.
- 22 When you sow in the eighth year, you will be eating from the old crop; until the ninth year, when its produce comes in, you shall eat the old.

This section also includes further laws about the Sabbath years⁹¹ and its additional teaching continues from v. 7. It looks like an interpolation.

Keeping the Lord’s laws are crucial for the blessing of the land and people’s lives (v. 18). Through the obedience of laws, the Lord will give his blessings and prosperity of the crops during the sixth, seventh and eighth years. During these years, the people could eat from the old crops.

4.3.4 The Institution of Redemption (Vv. 23–24)

23 וְהָאָרֶץ לֹא תִמָּכַר לְצִמְתֹּת כִּי־לִי הָאָרֶץ כִּי־גֵרִים וְתוֹשָׁבִים אַתֶּם עַמִּדִּי:
 24 וּבְכָל אֶרֶץ אֲחֻזַּתְכֶם גְּאֻלָּה תִּתְּנוּ לָאָרֶץ:

- 23 The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants.

91 For some scholars vv. 20–22 are unrelated to their immediate context. See e.g. Gerstenberger (1996, 343). Nihan argues that the instruction of vv. 20–22 implies that the Jubilee falls on a seventh year and that there is only one year without sowing, and not two as would be expected if the seventh Sabbath year and the Jubilee year were distinct (Nihan 2007, 520).

- 24 Throughout the land that you hold, you shall provide for the redemption of the land.

The institution of redemption shall be applied when the land and/or an Israelite were sold and there were in danger to be lost forever. If there were no one to redeem then the institution of Jubilee year needed to be applied.

The Lord is the main owner of the land and his land shall not be sold in perpetuity and his people are *תושבים וְגֵרִים*⁹² ‘aliens and tenants’ on his land. This term in v. 23 describes a group of people who are not ethnic Israelites but they have taken root and have settled in a society. A resident alien or *ger* is a person who does not own land. A resident alien is a person who is born in or belongs to another country, i.e. he is an unnaturalised foreigner who does not have citizenship of that country. He might work as a residential employee among the Israelites. The term *תושב* is more concerned with the social position of a sojourner who immigrates in order to find his livelihood in another place (Joosten 1996, 74).

The term *ger* in H can refer to Israelites (19:34; 25:23, 35). In the same way the patriarchs are described as aliens too (e.g. Gen 17:8; 23:4; 28:4; 35:27; Exod 6:4) (Baker 2009, 178). The Israelites were *gerim* in Egypt as well according to Deuteronomy. Lev 25:28, 42, 55 mention that the Lord brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Through the event of Exodus the Israelites changed their place of dwelling and also their master. The master of the Israelites was no longer Pharaoh but the Lord because the Lord freed the Israelites from the rule of the Egyptian master. The Israelites were freed from the bondage to become servants or slaves of the Lord (Joosten 1996, 97–98).

The central statement of Lev 25 is that the land is the Lord’s possession and his people are tenants of his land.⁹³ It is obvious that the people and the land are equally treated in Lev 25. They both belong to the Lord: ‘For to me the people of Israel are servants; they are my servants’ (v. 55a), ‘for the land is mine’⁹⁴ (v. 23b). Baker has made a similar significant statement:

92 Joosten proposes that the term *תושב* describes the social position while the term *גֵר* the juridical condition of the alien (Joosten 1996, 54–78). The phrase *גֵר* as a sojourner can be found also in Ex 22:20 and 23:9. About the alien in Israelite law see also Houten (1991).

93 This statement is not new. It is very similar to P’s view of the land in Genes-Exodus. Here is included into the law on debt-release relating to the concept of the land’s inalienability (Nihan 2007, 527).

94 Also in e.g. Exod 15:17; Ps 10:16; 85:2; Is 14:2; Jer 2:7; Ezek 36:5; 38:16; Hos 9:3.

Just as the land belongs to God and must not be sold in perpetuity (v. 23), so the people belong to God and must not be sold in perpetuity ... the poor person is not selling himself, but only his service for a specified period; just as land is not really sold but only a number of harvests. Moreover, the Egyptian experience has taught the people of Israel what it is like to suffer harsh treatment as slaves (Exod 1:13–14; cf. Deut 15:15), and they are not to treat fellow members of the covenant community in this way (v. 43a; cf. v. 46; Ezek. 34:4). Rather than acting as masters who inspire fear in others, they should fear their own Master (v. 43b; cf. vv. 17, 36; 19:14).

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Lev 25 emphasises that the land cannot be sold in perpetuity. Also, the people too cannot be sold in order to become slaves. This means that even though an Israelite must sell himself because of his financial crisis, he actually sells the usufruct of his labour. He does not lose his freedom because he does not sell himself but only the usufruct of his work. He will work for his master until the Jubilee year like a hired worker. He cannot be the property of his master (Nihan 2007, 528–530).

In a case that the Israelites would commit sins imitating the sinful activities of Egypt and Canaan, then they will violate the purity of the land. Joosten has argued that if the Israelites would be gone from the Lord's land, the Lord would no longer be present in the sanctuary and would no longer dwell in the land (Joosten 1996, 178, 189). Milgrom does not agree with Joosten's explanation. He said that the Lord was present in the land before and after the Israelites' dwelling in the land. The Lord was present in the land because the land is the Lord's regardless of whether the Israelites dwell in it. The Lord made the covenant with Abraham⁹⁵ in order that the land of Canaan would be the Israelites' dwelling place and also their residence in the future (Gen 17:8). This promise would not be withdrawn by the Israelites who might be expelled from that land. The land will continue to remain in the Lord's possession (Milgrom 2001, 2186–2187). The laws must be obeyed in the land by the Israelites in everyday life because the instructions of the Lord were important to define mutual covenantal relationship between the Lord and his people (Joosten 1996, 1).

In some cases the Jubilee legislation gives to the impoverished people the possibility for redemption (v. 24). The institution of redemption has the intention to help people in financial difficulties and to preserve the land in the pos-

95 About the original priestly covenant with Abraham see also Frankel (2011).

session of original owners. Implementation of that institution was on the next of kin, i.e. גֹּאֵל 'the redeemer'. The main aim of redemption⁹⁶ is the preservation of the land, i.e. alienated land needs to be returned to the original owner and also the redemption is a measure that helps the people in crises and need. The price of redemption is determined by the length of time from the sale until the Jubilee year.

After the reference to aliens another section begins written in the case-law format 'if ... then ...'. It is possible to discern some levels of impoverishment in Lev 25 (Milgrom 2004, 299–302; Bergsma 2007, 84). These levels describe the process of economic decline of an Israelite from a small debt, which can easily be redeemed, until the increased difficulties regarding the debts. The laws regarding the levels of impoverishment speak about the rights of the sale and the institution of redemption of property in vv. 25–34, laws concerning loans to the poor in vv. 35–38 and rules regarding slavery due to debts in vv. 39–55. Each of these sections of laws begins with כִּי־יָמוּד אָחִיךָ 'if your brother becomes poor'.⁹⁷ Thus, this case-law format 'if ... then ...' may be found in vv. 25, 26, 29, 35, 39, 47.

It is most likely that this set of laws was added to the institution of Jubilee.⁹⁸ The main goal of the institutions of redemption and Jubilee year was prevention of the rise of poverty in Israel.

4.3.5 Sold Land and Possibility for Redemption of That Land (Vv. 25–28)

- כִּי־יָמוּד אָחִיךָ וּמָכַר מֵאֲחֻזָּתוֹ וּבָא גֹאֵל הַקָּרֵב אֵלָיו וּגְאָל אֶת מִמְכָּר אָחִיו: 25
וְאִישׁ כִּי לֹא יִהְיֶה־לּוֹ גֹּאֵל וְהִשְׁיגָה יָדוֹ וּמָצָא בְּדֵי גֹאֲלָתוֹ: 26
וְחָשַׁב אֶת־שְׁנֵי מִמְכָּרוֹ וְהָשִׁיב אֶת־הָעֶדְף לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר מָכַר־לּוֹ וְשָׁב לְאֲחֻזָּתוֹ: 27
וְאִם לֹא־מָצָא יָדוֹ דֵּי הָשִׁיב לּוֹ וְהָיָה מִמְכָּרוֹ בְּיַד הַקֹּנֶה אֹתוֹ עַד שְׁנַת הַיּוֹבֵל וּצָא בַּיּוֹבֵל וְשָׁב לְאֲחֻזָּתוֹ: 28

- 25 If anyone of your kin falls into difficulty and sells a piece of property, then the next of kin shall come and redeem what the relative has sold.

96 e.g. Lev 25:30, 33, 54; 27:15, 19, 20; 27:27, 28, 31, 33; Num 5:8; 35:9–34; Ruth 3:13; 4:4.

97 'To be low, depressed' or 'to grow poor'. 'To grow poor' is usually assumed by the commentators. See e.g. Hartley (1992, 420).

98 The Sabbatical year is attested in earlier sources (Ex 23:10–11 and Deut 15:1–11), and "the complicated Jubilee Year arrangements needed more detailed directions." So this part of Lev 25 had to be earlier than the Jubilee law. See e.g. Noth (1965, 118); Nihan (2007, 522).

- 26 If the person has no one to redeem it, but then prospers and finds sufficient means to do so,
 27 the years since its sale shall be computed and the difference shall be refunded to the person to whom it was sold, and the property shall be returned.
 28 But if there are not sufficient means to recover it, what was sold shall remain with the purchaser until the year of jubilee; in the jubilee it shall be released, and the property shall be returned.

The first level of destitution is described in vv. 25–28 when a farmer must sell a piece of property in order to provide for the needs for life. Actually the crops were bought or sold, not the land and the basis for calculating the value of the land was the crops. The duty of the relative (*go'el*) was to redeem the sold property. The redeemer keeps the land until the Jubilee year. In this way he will not be a loser. He will get his payback through the keeping and using the benefits of that property until the Jubilee (Milgrom 2004, 300).

If the person has no redeemer, but he earns enough, than he may buy his lost property back. If there is no redeemer and this person cannot buy back his property, in that case his property would be returned to him at the Jubilee year and he shall be released from his debt.

4.3.6 Houses in a Walled City and Villages That Have No Walls around Them and Possibility for Their Redemption (Vv. 29–31)

- 29 וְאִישׁ כִּי־יִמְכַר בֵּית־מוֹשָׁב עִיר חֹמָה וְהִיתָה גְּאֻלָּתוֹ עַד־תֵּם שְׁנַת מִמְכָּרוֹ יָמִים תִּהְיֶה גְּאֻלָּתוֹ: 29
 30 וְאִם לֹא־יִגְאָל עַד־מְלֹאת לֹא שָׁנָה תְּמִימָה וְקָם הַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר־בָּעִיר אֲשֶׁר־לֹא חֹמָה לְצִמְיֹתָהּ לְקִנְיָהּ אִתּוֹ לְדֹרֹתָיו לֹא יֵצֵא בִּיבָל: 30
 31 וּבְתֵי הַחֲצִירִים אֲשֶׁר אֵין־לָהֶם חֹמָה סָבִיב עַל־שְׂדֵה הָאָרֶץ יִחָשֹׁב גְּאֻלָּהּ תִּהְיֶה־לּוֹ וּבִיבָל יֵצֵא: 31

- 29 If anyone sells a dwelling house in a walled city, it may be redeemed until a year has elapsed since its sale; the right of redemption shall be one year.
 30 If it is not redeemed before a full year has elapsed, a house that is in a walled city shall pass in perpetuity to the purchaser, throughout the generations; it shall not be released in the jubilee.
 31 But houses in villages that have no walls around them shall be classed as open country; they may be redeemed, and they shall be released in the jubilee.

The previous rules shall not be applied to dwelling-houses in a walled city.⁹⁹ They shall be redeemed within one year since their sale. After that year, they are regarded as permanently sold. If there is no redeemer then a house shall belong in perpetuity to the purchaser and it cannot be released in the Jubilee year.

But houses in villages that have no walls around them shall be redeemed and released in the Jubilee year. It is most likely that the institution of Jubilee did not protect city property but only ancestral farmers land.¹⁰⁰

4.3.7 The Property of Levites (Vv. 32–34)

- 32 וְעָרֵי הַלְוִיִּם בְּתֵי עָרֵי אֲחֻזָּתָם גְּאֻלַּת עוֹלָם תִּהְיֶה לָּלֵוִיִּם:
 33 וְאִשָּׁר יִגְאֹל מִן־הַלְוִיִּם וַיֵּצֵא מִמִּכְר־בֵּית וְעִיר אֲחֻזָּתוֹ בַּיָּבֵל כִּי בְתֵי עָרֵי הַלְוִיִּם הוּא
 אֲחֻזָּתָם בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 34 וְשָׂדֶה מִגֵּרֶשׁ עָרֵיהֶם לֹא יִמָּכַר כִּי־אֲחֻזַּת עוֹלָם הוּא לָהֶם:

- 32 As for the cities of the Levites, the Levites shall forever have the right of redemption of the houses in the cities belonging to them.
 33 Such property as may be redeemed from the Levites—houses sold in a city belonging to them—shall be released in the jubilee; because the houses in the cities of the Levites are their possession among the people of Israel.
 34 But the open land around their cities may not be sold; for that is their possession for all time.

In these verses we find the first mentioning of the Levites in Leviticus. The Levites have completely different laws regarding their property from other Israelites because they did not receive land as a possession. Levites are mentioned as a distinct group of people among the rest of the Lord's people. They were consecrated to serve the Lord and they did not receive the portion of land except for the ground surrounding their cities (vv. 32–34) (Baker 2009, 175). Some biblical verses underline that the Levites' possession and inheritance was only the Lord (Num 18:20; Deut 17:9, 18; 18:1; Ezek 44:28) and that they were supported by the offerings of the people (Num 18:21–24; Deut 12:8–19). However, they have for ever rights of redemption of the houses in the cities belonging to

99 About the cities in Ancient Israel see North (2000, 74–85).

100 This section after vv. 29–31 is logical. The tradition about levitical towns is mentioned in Num 35:1–8; Jos 21 and 1 Chr 6:39–66. See also Nihan (2007, 522).

them. Also, their houses shall be released in the Jubilee year. Open land around their cities¹⁰¹ is their possession too and it cannot be sold. Their houses in the cities are always subject to the laws of Jubilee and redemption and they had similar rights like the Israelites' fields (Baker 2009, 92–94). So, here the priestly tribe is given preferential treatment and safeguard. This anticipates their status not yet defined.

4.3.8 Interest-Free Loans and the Theme of Egypt (Vv. 35–38)

וְכִי־יָמוּד אֶחָיִד וּמָטָה יָדוֹ עִמָּד וְהִחֲזִקְתָּ בּוֹ גֵּר וְתוֹשֵׁב וְחִי עִמָּד:	35
אֶל־תִּקַּח מֵאִתּוֹ גֶּשֶׁד וְתִרְבִּית וְיִרְאֵת מֵאֱלֹהֶיךָ וְחִי אֶחָיִד עִמָּד:	36
אֶת־כֶּסֶףךָ לֹא־תִתֶּן לוֹ בְּגִשְׁד וּבִמְרִבִּית לֹא־תִתֶּן אֶכְלָד:	37
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לִתֵּת לָכֶם אֶת־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים:	38

- 35 If any of your kin fall into difficulty and become dependent on you, you shall support them; they shall live with you as though resident aliens.
- 36 Do not take interest in advance or otherwise make a profit from them, but fear your God; let them live with you.
- 37 You shall not lend them your money at interest taken in advance, or provide them food at a profit.
- 38 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, to be your God.

People shall support each other and not take interest in advance or take advantage of the poor and needy. The Lord brought his people out of the bondage of Egypt, thus his people shall imitate him and treat each other with kindness and generosity. The Lord brought them out from Egypt and gave them the land of Canaan. Milgrom said that the right of redemption is theologically grounded because the Israelites received their property from the Lord. The Lord redeemed his people from the Egyptian bondage. Also, he will redeem them in the future from the land of their enemies (cf. Lev 26:44–45). These are examples of the Lord's intervention because his land and his people were lost and enslaved. The people of the Lord are invited to do the same (Milgrom 2001, 2234–2235). As the Lord redeemed Israel, the Israelites must redeem the land from the greedy creditor. The statement “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan, to be your God”

101 About the Levitical cities see e.g. Albright (1942, 121–124); North (2000, 82–84).

(v. 38) shows the separation of Israelites from Egypt. The Lord's chosen people needs to be set apart in order to be the Lord's people.

Vv. 35–38 do not actually say anything about redemption. Thus, in this kind of situation there is nothing and no one to redeem. V. 36 uses the word נִשָּׂא for interest or usury. This verse confirms that interest was forbidden when one Israelite made a loan to another (cf. Deut 23:19–20). However, Lev 25 cannot resist the charging of interest because it speaks of dependency of the debtor. Probably loans were made with the interest discounted at the start. If the person could not pay his loan right on time, he became dependent (v. 35) but no further interest could be charged. The Levitical legislation underlines the importance of humane treatment of the needy. It is most likely that interest was allowed only when a debtor did not repay his debts on time.¹⁰²

4.3.9 An Impoverished Israelite Sells Himself to the Wealthier Person (Vv. 39–46)

וְכִי־יִמּוֹד אֶחָיִד עִמָּךְ וְנִמְכַּר־לָךְ לֹא־תַעֲבֹד בּוֹ עֲבָדֶת עָבָד: 39
כְּשֹׁכֵר כְּתוּשָׁב יִהְיֶה עִמָּךְ עַד־שְׁנַת הַיָּבֵל יַעֲבֹד עִמָּךְ: 40
וַיָּצֵא מֵעִמָּךְ הוּא וּבָנָיו עִמּוֹ וְשֶׁב אֶל־מִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ וְאֶל־אֲחֻזַּת אֲבֹתָיו יָשׁוּב: 41
כִּי־עַבְדֵי הֵם אֲשֶׁר־הוּצָאתִי אִתָּם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יִמְכְּרוּ מִמִּכְרֶת עָבָד: 42
לֹא־תִרְדָּה בּוֹ בַּפֶּרֶד וִירֹאֶת מֵאֱלֹהִיךָ: 43
וְעַבְדְּךָ וְאִמָּתְךָ אֲשֶׁר יִהְיוּ־לָךְ מֵאֵת הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר סָבִיב־יִכֶּם מֵהֶם תִּקְנוּ עָבֵד וְאִמָּה: 44
וְגַם מִבְּנֵי הַתּוֹשְׁבִים הַגֵּרִים עִמָּכֶם מֵהֶם תִּקְנוּ וּמִמִּשְׁפַּחְתָּם אֲשֶׁר עִמָּכֶם אֲשֶׁר 45
הוֹלִידוּ בְּאֶרְצְכֶם וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְאֻחָזָה:
וְהַנִּחְנַחְתֶּם אִתָּם לִבְנֵיכֶם אַחֲרֵיכֶם לְרֶשֶׁת אֻחָזָה לְעַלְם בָּהֶם תַּעֲבֹדוּ וּבְאֻחֵיכֶם 46
בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ בְּאֻחָיו לֹא־תִרְדָּה בּוֹ בַּפֶּרֶד:

- 39 If any who are dependent on you become so impoverished that they sell themselves to you, you shall not make them serve as slaves.
- 40 They shall remain with you as hired or bound labourers. They shall serve with you until the year of the jubilee.
- 41 Then they and their children with them shall be free from your authority; they shall go back to their own family and return to their ancestral property.

¹⁰² The coinage of cash money became known after 600 B.C.E. in the Babylonian and Persian periods. For North, this may help to detect that the Jubilee was established in the Persian period. Also, it is generally accepted that the final form of Lev 25 and the whole Pentateuch have been established in that time as well (North 2000, 55).

- 42 For they are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves are sold.
- 43 You shall not rule over them with harshness, but shall fear your God.
- 44 As for the male and female slaves whom you may have, it is from the nations around you that you may acquire male and female slaves.
- 45 You may also acquire them from among the aliens residing with you, and from their families that are with you, who have been born in your land; and they may be your property.
- 46 You may keep them as a possession for your children after you, for them to inherit as property. These you may treat as slaves, but as for your fellow Israelites, no one shall rule over the other with harshness.

When an impoverished person sell himself because he has not anything left to sell or he is not able to pledge for loans to a fellow Israelite than his position becomes a position of a hired or bounded labourer, not as a slave.¹⁰³ A hired worker is a free person. He shall work until the Jubilee year and he and his family shall go back to their ancestral property free of any debt.

The Israelites shall not be sold as slaves and they cannot treat each other with harshness. This notion 'to rule over with harshness' may be found in vv. 43, 46, 53 and Ezek 34:4. The Hebrew word פָּרַךְ means 'harshness, cruelty, ruthlessness, violence'. This Hebrew word is used also in Exod 1:13, 14 as a description that the Egyptians were harsh and ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on the Israelites.

Through the repetition of that rule, the legislator wants to underline its importance. However, the Israelites can have male and female slaves from the other nations. For the first time in the chapter, v. 44 refers to true slavery but only of non-Israelites. The Israelites need to be only the Lord's permanent slaves (v. 42) (Hartley 1992, 306). Non-Israelites may be treated as slaves because they do not belong to the Lord and have not been delivered by the Lord from slavery in Egypt. In vv. 45–55 Joosten sees a sign of national pride and inequality between resident aliens and Israelites (Joosten 1996, 73). There were certain rules concerning who shall be a slave. Unlike the Israelites, the aliens could be slaves for an entire lifetime.

The Hebrew word נָחַךְ ('fellow, kin, brother') may be found nine times in Lev 25 (vv. 14, 25 (two times), 35, 36, 39, 46, 47, 48). This word can be found outside Lev 25 in H only in Lev 19:17 and 26:37. However, the Hebrew word עֲבָדִית occurs

103 The institution of slavery exists in the other parts of the Scriptures. Even today in some countries, such as India, slavery exists. See also Culbertson (2011).

in Lev 18:20; 19:11, 15, 17; 24:19; 25:14, 15, 17. The word עֲמִית is more common for H, except in Lev 25. Thus, it is most likely that Lev 25 relies on Deut 15 and its characteristic usage of the word נָאָ (Levinson 2006, 317–318).

Lev 25 forbids permanent slavery for the Israelites by inventing the terminology of hired worker or labour in his perception of slavery. Contrarily to Deut 15:16–17, H does not mention any possibility for perpetual Israelite slavery.¹⁰⁴ Levinson demonstrates that H's slavery and manumission laws depend upon Exod 21:2–6 and Deut 15:12–18. He argues that Lev 25:44–46 in his law of permanent slavery for foreigners uses the legislation of slavery from Exod 21:2–6. Lev 25:44–46¹⁰⁵ uses the verbs קָנָה 'to buy' and עָבַד 'to serve' and the prepositional phrase לְעוֹלָם 'forever'. H's intention in using these words from Exod 21:2–6 is to show that its legislation forbids any possibility of having Israelite for slaves (Levinson 2004, 304–316; 2005, 617–630). Furthermore, some scholars argue that H in Lev 25:39–46 also reapplies the notion of permanent slavery in Deut 15:12–18 to its non-Israelite slavery. H changes the possibility from the Israelite in the earlier legislation to the non-Israelite regarding the slavery. It is clear that H abolishes the possibility of permanent slavery for the Israelites but allows it for foreigners. Thus, chattel permanent slavery is not forbidden for the non-Israelites in the H legislation (Stackert 2007, 155–157).

Such extensive literary interaction in the compositional process of Lev 25:39–55 suggests that the Holiness slavery and manumission laws are a 'learned text', reflecting not the historical *realia* of ancient Israelite social practice but instead a particular intellectual engagement with the religious and cultural (textual) tradition. Those who attempt to reconstruct actual, historical practice through these texts fail to recognise their scholastic nature *and that of their legal patrimonies*.

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There are some scholars who underline that D and H are two independent laws regarding the slavery and manumission laws (e.g. Joosten 1994, 194). However, throughout the literary relationship regarding that institution, it is obvious that H reflects its usage of D and CC.

104 Also Nehemiah (Neh 5:1–13) wanted to abolish debt-slavery for Jews (Weinfeld 1990, 53).

105 Vv. 44–46 have been interpreted as an interpolation by some authors. See e.g. Elliger (1966, 341); Cholewinski (1976, 113); Fabry (1997, 15, 100).

4.3.10 Redemption of an Israelite Held by a Non-Israelite (Vv. 47–55)

47 וְכִי תִשָּׁג יָד גֵּר וְתוֹשֵׁב עִמָּךְ וּמָד אֶחִיד עִמּוֹ וְנִמְכַּר לְגֵר וְתוֹשֵׁב עִמָּךְ אֹל לְעַקֵּר
 מִשְׁפַּחַת גֵּר:
 48 אַחֲרֵי נִמְכַּר גֵּאֻלָּהּ תִּהְיֶה-לּוֹ אֶחָד מֵאֲחִיו יִגְאֻלֶּנּוּ:
 49 אִזְדָּדוּ אֹל בְּיָדוֹ יִגְאֻלֶּנּוּ אִזְ-מִשְׁאֵר בָּשָׂרוֹ מִמִּשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ יִגְאֻלֶּנּוּ אִזְ-הַשִּׁיגָה יָדוֹ
 וְנִגְאֹל:
 50 וְחֹשֶׁב עַם-קִנְיָהּ מִשְׁנֵת הַמִּכְרוֹ לֹא עַד שְׁנַת הַיָּבֵל וְהָיָה כֶּסֶף מִמִּכְרוֹ בְּמִסְפַּר שָׁנִים
 כִּימֵי שָׂכִיר יִהְיֶה עִמּוֹ:
 51 אִם-עוֹד רַבּוֹת בְּשָׁנִים לִפְיָהֶן יָשִׁיב גֵּאֻלָּתוֹ מִכֶּסֶף מִקְנָתוֹ:
 52 וְאִם-מְעַט נִשְׁאַר בְּשָׁנִים עַד-שְׁנַת הַיָּבֵל וְחֹשֶׁב-לּוֹ כְּפִי שָׁנָיו יָשִׁיב אֶת-גֵּאֻלָּתוֹ:
 53 כְּשָׂכִיר שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה יִהְיֶה עִמּוֹ לֹא-יִרְדָּנּוּ בַּפֶּרֶד לְעֵינָיו:
 54 וְאִם-לֹא יִגְאֹל בְּאֻלָּהּ וַיַּעַא בְּשְׁנַת הַיָּבֵל הוּא וּבָנָיו עִמּוֹ
 55 כִּי-לִי בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדִים עַבְדֵּי הָאֱלֹהִים הֵם אֲשֶׁר-הוֹצֵאתִי אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

- 47 If resident aliens among you prosper, and if any of your kin fall into difficulty with one of them and sell themselves to an alien, or to a branch of the alien's family,
 48 after they have sold themselves they shall have the right of redemption; one of their brothers may redeem them,
 49 or their uncle or their uncle's son may redeem them, or anyone of their family who is of their own flesh may redeem them; or if they prosper they may redeem themselves.
 50 They shall compute with the purchaser the total from the year when they sold themselves to the alien until the jubilee year; the price of the sale shall be applied to the number of years: the time they were with the owner shall be rated as the time of a hired labourer.
 51 If many years remain, they shall pay for their redemption in proportion to the purchase price;
 52 and if few years remain until the jubilee year, they shall compute thus: according to the years involved they shall make payment for their redemption.
 53 As a labourer hired by the year they shall be under the alien's authority, who shall not, however, rule with harshness over them in your sight.
 54 And if they have not been redeemed in any of these ways, they and their children with them shall go free in the jubilee year.
 55 For to me the people of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought out from the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

If an impoverished person finds himself without land, any possibility to get a loan or to sell himself to a fellow Israelite, then he needs to sell himself to a resident wealthy alien (Houten 1991, 129–134). Most likely it would happen because a person had borrowed from an alien and could not pay him back. It is a duty of his kinsman to redeem him or if he prospers then he may redeem himself. The price of the sale shall be according to the number of years until the next Jubilee year. If an Israelite must be sold to *a ger* then the Israelite needs to serve him as a slave until he will be freed through the process of redemption or in the year of Jubilee (Nihan 2007, 529–531, 535). The time he was with the alien owner shall be rated as the time of a hired labourer. If there is no redeemer and a person is not able to redeem himself, then release will follow in the Jubilee year. Only Israelites sold to non-Israelite masters and sold land can be redeemed according to the laws of redemption.

Each new cycle of the Jubilee year should be a reminder of when the Israelites were brought from Egypt into the land by the Lord. The Lord redeemed his people from the Egyptian bondage.¹⁰⁶ Thus, his servants need to do similarly and redeem a person that is enslaved by a non-Israelite. An Israelite who was enslaved by a non-Israelite was seen as a captive, thus he needs to be redeemed (Milgrom 2001, 2234–2235).

Redeemed land stayed in the possession of the person who redeemed that land and the redeemed person worked for his redeemer until the Jubilee (Chirichigno 1993, 340–341; Milgrom 2001, 2192–2195). The redeemer benefited through his usage of the usufruct of the land until the next Jubilee when the land needed to be given back to its original owner. The purchase by the redeemer was not charity because he would keep the title on that land until the Jubilee. Contrarily to the institution of redemption in Lev 25, e.g. the redeemer in the book of Ruth has the right to possess the land in perpetuity for himself. The levitical legislation does not allow that because the redeemer in H can use the redeemed field only until the next Jubilee year. The law of redemption in H brings again something new and different.

4.4 *Conclusion on the Exegetical Interpretation of Leviticus 25*

The chapter has at least three different stages. The first stage contains vv. 1–7 and talks about the Sabbath and the Sabbath year. The next stage includes the legislation of the Jubilee year in vv. 8–17 and an interpolation regarding the legislation of the Sabbatical year in vv. 18–22. The last stage, vv. 24–55 talk about the institution of redemption while v. 23 is connected with the issue of Jubilee.

¹⁰⁶ E.g. Exod 6:6–7; 15:13; Ps 106:10; Is 35:4, 9; 43:1; 44:22, 23; 48:20; 51:10; 52:3; 63:9; Mic 4:10.

Vv. 18–22 are closely connected with vv. 1–7 and bring some further teaching regarding the legislation of Sabbatical year. The core of the chapter refers to the Jubilee year in vv. 8–17, 23. It is most likely that the last stage regarding the institution of redemption is a later appendix to the regulations of the Jubilee year.

Lev 25:2 underlines that the entire land shall observe Sabbath rest in order that the land demonstrates its holiness through Sabbath rest. Lev 25:3–4 describes the observation of the Sabbatical year in a similar way as the observance of the Sabbath in Lev 23:3. H brings an innovation into the Sabbath ideology by formulating the seventh year as a Sabbath. Keeping the Sabbath day reflects also concern and care for the Lord's creation. It means also participation in the rhythm of work and rest. The institution of the Sabbatical year in Lev 25 is an expansion and modification of the legislations of the fallow year described in Exod 23:10–11 and the release year in Deut 15. Accordingly, H brings a new, agricultural concept within the Sabbath ideology.

The Jubilee year is connected with the seventh Sabbath year. Every fifty year on the Day of Atonement, on the tenth day of the seventh month with the sound of ram's horn begins the Jubilee year. The sound of horn or trumpet is a signal of liberty for the inauguration of the celebration of the Jubilee holy year. After purgation of the sanctuary and repentance of the people, the Jubilee is ready to begin. In the Jubilee year, every Israelite is able to return to his possession of the land and his debts need to be cancelled. Freedom from the bondage of debt and poverty and restoration of the family and property are the main intention of the legislation of Jubilee year. In the same way as the Israelites keep the Sabbath day holy by abstaining from doing any productive work, they should not work on the land during the Jubilee year as well (vv. 11–12). In Lev 25 release of debts and release of the land are connected in the same way as the abstention of work with the rest of the land. Accordingly, H makes connection between those sacred times.

Lev 25 emphasises the fact that the land is God's possession. The understanding of possession is more like stewardship than the absolute right of ownership. God is the ultimate owner of the land (Lev 25:23). Property is a sacred trust to be kept in the family and passed on next generations, and the produce of the land is intended for the benefit of the owner and to be shared with others. The possession needs to be a resource for the common good, with an importance on responsibility and compassion rather than ownership and power. Just as the land is not sold in perpetuity but only a number of harvests, also the poor people are not selling themselves but only their work for a certain period of time. When an Israelite has a difficult financial crisis, he could sell only the product of his work not himself. He needs to work for his master until the next Jubilee year like a hired worker. The Lord is the main owner of the land and his people

are tenants of his land. The land and the people belong to the Lord and they are equally treated in Lev 25 (vv. 23b, 55a). The example of the Egyptian experience has taught the Israelites what it is like to suffer cruel treatment as slaves, so they are not supposed to treat their fellow members of the covenant community in this harsh way. They need to fear their own Master the Lord.

According to Lev 25, only the usufruct of the land and the labour of the Israelite may be sold, not the land itself neither the Israelite himself. The inalienability of the land serves to keep that land within the family. But the land that was sold on the open market will be returned to the original owner at the Jubilee. The case-law format 'if ... then ...' may be found in vv. 25, 26, 29, 35, 39, 47 and describes levels of impoverishment, which are connected with the process of socio-economic decline and problems of increased debts. These levels of impoverishment are described in vv. 25–34 through the institution of property redemption, vv. 35–38 and the laws concerning the loans to the poor and vv. 39–55 as the rules concerning slavery due to debts. The price of redemption is determined by the length of time from the sale until the year of Jubilee.

In a case that the institution of redemption was not practised then the institution of the Jubilee year would be activated. Redeemed land can be in the possession of redeemer and a redeemed person need to work for his redeemer until the year of Jubilee. The redeemer could get the usufruct of the land and products of someone's work until the next year when the land needs to be returned to its original owner and an indebted person released from his debts. Comparing to the institution of redemption, for example in the book of Ruth, H brings something new and different regarding the law of redemption where the redeemer does not have a right to possess the land and indebted person in perpetuity for himself.

Lev 25 relies on Deut 15 in its usage of the word נֶזֶק. Also, Lev 25 forbids the permanent slavery for the Israelites by using the new terminology of hired worker or labourer in its perception of slavery. It does not give any possibility for perpetual slavery for the Israelites. H's explanation of the manumission laws and slavery depends on Exod 21:2–6 and Deut 15:12–18. Lev 25:44–46 uses the rules regarding the slavery described in Exod 21:2–6 and Deut 15:12–18, allowing the possibility for permanent slavery only for aliens and foreigners, not for Israelite slaves. H transfers the possibility for the Israelite in the earlier legislations of CC and D to the non-Israelite regarding slavery. H abolishes permanent slavery for the Israelites but allows it for foreigners.

The Jubilee year is the last helpful measure for the needy in case that the institution of redemption did not work. The main intention of the institution of redemption and Jubilee year is the prevention of increased poverty.

5 Meaning of the Year of Jubilee in Leviticus 25

On the Day of Atonement, when the trumpet was sounded on the tenth day of the seventh month, it was the year of Jubilee. During the Day of Atonement¹⁰⁷ a high priest performed the ritual for the expiation for the whole community. The Lord forgave the sins of people who confessed their sins and ensured his continued presence among his people. Forgiveness or cancellation of sins of the Lord's people on the Day of Atonement was interrelated with cancellation of debts, which some people owed to their neighbours or fellows during the year of Jubilee. When the people had received forgiveness of their sins then the Jubilee year began (Tidball 2005, 295). It is not by an accident that the Jubilee year began on the Day of Atonement because the Jubilee is connected very tightly with the atonement of sins.

A new cycle could begin with the Jubilee year only after the repentance of all sins and atonement of sanctuary. The Jubilee is meant to bring a fresh and new beginning and during that year acts of justice and righteousness shall be performed. The Day of Atonement has the most significant cultic and ritual performance whereas the Jubilee year has the most significant social and economical characteristic (Bergsma 2007, 82). It is the holiest day of the year regarding the relationship between the Lord and his people, i.e. the Lord's presence in the sanctuary, whereas the Jubilee year is the holiest year regarding the socio-economic relation in a society, and the Lord's extended presence on the land among his people.

5.1 *Meaning and Dating of the Legislation of Jubilee Year*

It is possible to find among some scholars several definitions regarding the institution of Jubilee,¹⁰⁸ such as:

The Jubilee is:

- the year of liberty every 50th year following seven cycles of seven years;
- a proclamation of freedom or liberty throughout the land;

107 The Day of Atonement is mentioned also in Lev 23:27 ff. as *יום הכִּפּוּרִים* and Num 29:7 ff. without giving it a name but refers to the same occasion. The Priestly source and the Holiness Code are the only sources that speak about the Day of Atonement. See e.g. Houten (1991, 141–142).

108 E.g. Sloan has found some major provisions of the Jubilee year are: the return of all property to the original owner or his family; the release of all Jewish slaves; the cancellation of debts and the command to let the land lie fallow (Sloan 1977, 4–11).

- freedom for all Israelite labourer, hired workers and slaves;
- return to family and land (every possession that has been leased out needs to be returned to the owner);
- a measure for the equality of all Israelites;
- a festival in the seventh month;
- a national fixed festival;
- a cyclical calendar;
- restoration of land;
- a Sabbath rest for the people and the land;
- release from socio-economic servitude.¹⁰⁹

The mentioned definitions of Jubilee imply three different ways of understanding יובל: a time, an act and what it means. Most of the time the word יובל seems to be a time, but when שנת precedes, it is an act or reflects meaning. Certainly, the main typical meaning of the Jubilee is giving back the land to the original owner and restoration of socio-economic society. The Jubilee is also a measure to prevent the loss of property, which is a source for living, and to minimise a gap between the rich and the poor, i.e. supports the position of the small property-owners who may be in danger because of socio-economic crisis (Nihan 2007, 557–558). Furthermore, the Jubilee legislation may be seen as an agrarian law because the land is the basis of survival for the families and as a last measure in which property needs to be restored to its owners, debt-servitude limited and indentured persons released.

The Hebrew word דָּרֹר in Lev 25:10; Is 61:1 and Jer 34:8, 15, 17 means liberty, freedom, emancipation, release.¹¹⁰ 'Liberty' in Lev 25 is presented in social, economic, ethical and political terms. In that context, liberty means freedom for slaves and captive workers, cancellation of debts, care for the needy, restoration of families, redistribution of land, restoration of justice, rest for the land and living beings. Liberty from labour and debts are connected with the restoration of families and repossession of the family land (Tidball 2005, 295). Furthermore, the institution of Jubilee is meant to avoid the permanent loss and separation of the Israelites from their land (Bergsma 2007, 85).

Regarding Lev 25, i.e. the Jubilee law, there is no clear evidence of the historical observance of the Jubilee in the Bible. Thus, the most scholars have said that it is not possible to give a definitive answer whether the biblical Jubilee

109 E.g. Hartley (1992, 443); Milgrom (2001, 2271); Bergsma (2007, 20).

110 Some authors combine Jeremiah's prophecy of the 'seventy years' with the Jubilee legislation. See e.g. Whitley (1954); Holladay (1989); Applegate (1997); Bergsma (2007).

was observed in ancient Israel. It is mostly accepted that the Jubilee was a very ancient law, which was not completely kept and observed.¹¹¹ Regarding the dating of Lev 25 and its legislation of the Jubilee year, the majority of scholars using a methodology of comparing the H source with the other biblical laws such as CC, D and P.

About the historical origin of the Jubilee laws scholars differ from the twelfth until fifth century B.C.E. (Bergsma 2007, 16). For example, North favours the time of occupation or settlement¹¹² for the origin of the Jubilee legislation when Joshua divided the plot of land to each Israelite within the tribal society after the occupation of the land (North 1954, 45, 204–206).

It is very common among scholars to make a connection between the Mesopotamian laws¹¹³ from the early second millennium B.C.E. called *anduraru(m)* and *mišarum* and the biblical laws in Lev 25 *deror* and *yobel*¹¹⁴ (Barton and Muddiman 2001, 106–107). For some scholars similarities between the Mesopotamian laws and biblical laws are important for their mutual interpretations

111 E.g. Barker tried to detect the Jubilee year in the history of Israel. According to her, the Jubilee year was:

1. 722 B.C.E. it was also the date for Isaiah's Jubilee sign (Is 37:30–32). She underlines that this text belongs with the earlier oracles to Ahaz. The Northern kingdom of Israel was invaded by Assyria in 724 B.C.E. So, the Jubilee was a sign of hope for Jerusalem.
2. 622 B.C.E. during the 18th year of king Josiah's reign. That was probably the reason for the temple restoration.
3. 572 B.C.E. during the 14th year after Jerusalem was conquered. Ezekiel's vision of the restoration was a Jubilee vision (Ezek 40:1).
4. 522 B.C.E. Zerubbabel and Joshua's coming to Jerusalem and attempting to re-establish worship.
5. 473 B.C.E. and 424 B.C.E. Ezra's return to Jerusalem and his covenant renewal probably happened in 428 B.C.E. (Ezra 10). Regarding Daniel's seventy weeks of years were reckoned from this time and the seventy weeks of years were to end when Jerusalem was destroyed (Dan 9). According to the Jewish tradition, the 490 years ended in 68 C.E. So, the tenth Jubilee began in 17/19 C.E. and that was the context for the ministry of Jesus (Barker 1999, 2–3).

112 See also Alt (1968); Blosser (1979); Weinfeld (1990); Hartley (1992).

113 About some ancient documents, such as, Hammurabi's law on agriculture, Eshnunna tablets, the Nuzi *andurâru*, Hittite law, old Assyrian and Kultepe documents, see North (1954, 46–69).

114 With regard to the pre-history of the Jubilee, the relevant ancient Near Eastern materials have been gathered and analysed by Weinfeld. For Weinfeld the Jubilee is the ancient legislation that reflected some actual historical practices based on ANE parallels in *misharum* and *anduratum* proclamations (Weinfeld 1995).

and also for the acceptance that the Jubilee really existed.¹¹⁵ They have similar regulations such as: owners get back their land, slaves are freed and debts cancelled. A king was in charge of these regulations and by his goodwill those regulations were taken into practice. That was a question of a king's surprise. Nobody could figure out when these regulations could be taken into practice except a king. Generally, this ancient old source differs from the biblical Jubilee because it is irregular and no fixed event (Westbrook 1991, 45–48). On the other hand, the Jubilee year has a cyclical regime, i.e. every fiftieth year the Jubilee year shall be celebrated. The Jubilee legislation underlines that the land and the people belong only to the Lord. The Jubilee law means some kind of rehabilitation of society.

Also Bergsma footnotes the other scholars who say that the Jubilee in Lev 25 has similarities with the Ancient Near Eastern law and practice, implying an early dating for the Jubilee based on some ancient Hebrew words. For Bergsma and some other scholars, a few ancient Hebrew terms and an absence of references to a state context or king in the text indicate the pre-monarchic period too (Bergsma 2007, 61). Also, for him some ancient Hebrew terms are important, such as יִבְלָל being gradually replaced by the word שׁוֹפָר. He concludes that if the word יִבְלָל meant originally ram's horn, thus it means the antiquity and some kind of early practice of the institution. Beside the archaic terms in Lev 25, also a lack of reference to a state framework or king in Lev 25 describes the society of pre-monarchic, tribal Israel, says Bergsma (2007, 61–62).

As previously mentioned, some scholars like Bergsma have found an importance to recognise the similarities between the Mesopotamian laws and biblical laws in order to find a confirmation that the legislation of Jubilee really existed and that was not a utopia. This is not a clear statement because it is obvious that the Mesopotamian laws are irregular and without fixed time. Also, Milgrom speaks in one place that the Jubilee regulation was irrelevant to date because there is no concrete argument that it was ever practiced but on the other hand he underlines that the Jubilee legislation was not completely utopian. The main cause why he concludes that may be found in vv. 29–34. These verses regarding houses in the walled cities in the Jubilee laws are an insertion. If the Jubilee was a utopia then vv. 29–34 would not be added to the legislation of Jubilee (Milgrom 2004, 304, 308).

Furthermore, the Talmud says that the year of Jubilee and the Sabbatical year were established and counted from the settlement until the exile. During the exile period they were not applied but they were counted (b. Arakin 12b,

115 E.g. Mendelsohn (1949); Lewy (1958, 21–31); Neufeld (1958, 53–124).

32b). The reason for that kind of statement is that the Talmud takes the history literally. Contrarily, some scholars emphasise that the Jubilee legislation was envisioned and composed in the postexilic time or in the beginning of the Persian period by the priest or the school of priests.¹¹⁶

It must be emphasised that the Jubilee legislation has a cyclical period. The Jubilee legislations underline that the land and the people belong only to the Lord not to a king. Thus, the Mesopotamian laws differ from the laws of Jubilee. It is obvious that the levitical legislation speaks about the individual and private ownership. Lev 25:10, 13 mention a return to one's possession and the question of redemption is connected with the personal security. Regarding the Jubilee legislation the existential problems of members of society must be solved at least once in a life-time and each member of society needs to get a new opportunity for a new start and possibility for a renewed life. One of the main reasons for the Jubilee laws is some kind of remedy of society.

The Jubilee ideology can be located in the periods where the people were disappointed with the rules of the kings during the monarchy and when they returned to Israel, i.e. somewhere at the end of the First Temple period, during the exilic time in the Babylon or during the postexilic period.¹¹⁷ During those periods, especially when the people returned to Judea, the socio-economic situation was unstable. In that kind of situation it was very easy to embrace a broader territory where the Israelites would have a better socio-economic life. The exiles especially would have wanted to get their old land back. Amit argues that the Jubilee legislation tried to bring and actualise again those old values into a broken and wounded society because the Jubilee legislation wants to reshape a socio-economic society (Amit 1992, 58). Some scholars, as De Vaux, say that the institution of Jubilee was established after the Sabbatical year but unfortunately, it was a utopian law never practiced (De Vaux 1965, 177).

This study does not agree that the institution of Jubilee has been useless or impractical. Even though the institution of the Jubilee has not been fully implemented, we may agree with Brueggemann's words:

In any discussion of Leviticus 25, someone is sure to assert in the guise of a question, "There is no evidence, is there, that Israel ever practiced this program?" The intent of such a rhetorical question is to assert that the Jubilee provision is utterly unworkable and unrealistic, and that Israel

116 E.g. Gnuse (1985); Amit (1992); Fager (1993); Grabbe (1993); Otto (1994); Habel (1995); Gerstenberger (1996); Ringe (2004); Nihan (2007).

117 E.g. Ringe (1985); Fager (1993); Habel (1995).

recognised its impracticability from the beginning. Such a self-serving protest misses the point of such a text. What I judge to be important about this text is that Israel thought this provision, asserted it, hoped it. Israel included this provision in the Torah that gives Israel its fundamental identity. The Jubilee provision is waiting to be implemented, as is true of many other visionary elements of the Bible.

BRUEGGEMANN 1989, 102

Even though the Jubilee is not an instruction for only one historical community, its rules may help to establish righteous and just societies. It is most likely that the priests during the exilic and post-exilic period used the existing Jubilee institution and did some corrections and edition on it. "The unaffected reference to the Jubilee in this text, which most scholars hold to come from a different tradition than Lev 25 (P vs. H), also indicates that the Jubilee was not the invention of an isolated redactor or group of redactors, but a known tradition among more than one school of thought in Israel." (Bergsma 2007, 124).

The conception of Jubilee legislation was reshaped by the priests because its concept corresponds to the socio-economic and political situation of the returning exiles (Fager 1993, 121).¹¹⁸ During the exile, the most Israelites had lost their land and during their return to Israel they needed to get again the right to possess the land. Therefore, the Jubilee legislation is not the legislation for only one concrete system and society but the Jubilee is a countermeasure to a society that supports the latifundism, i.e. it is attempt to restrict large land holding in the hands of few people at the expense of many and to protect the Israelite society from the loss of land. The Jubilee legislation is more ethical and cultic law than the strict law with sanctions.

5.2 *The Jubilee Year vs. the Sabbath Year*

The Jubilee year and the Sabbath year were national established laws (Joosten 1996, 86). Declaration of freedom for all inhabitants of the land was proclaimed in the 'Super-Sabbatical'.

The question may be asked: Is the Jubilee year an additional Sabbatical year? Some scholars believe that the Jubilee was only one day or one month within the fiftieth year. Some other scholars emphasise that the Jubilee year was a Sabbatical year because it corresponds to the seven Sabbatical years.¹¹⁹

118 Fager discusses the relationship of Lev 25 with Ezek 40–48 and concludes that the 'school of Ezekiel' that authored Ezek 40–48 and 'the priests' who wrote Lev 25 share a common tradition.

119 E.g. North (1954, 129–134); Hartley (1992, 434–436); Baker (2009, 83). Lefebvre interprets

Contrarily, Milgrom says that the Jubilee year is not a Sabbatical and it is not connected with the Sabbath because that term cannot be found in the part of Leviticus that speaks about the Jubilee. He notices that during the Jubilee year only the Israelites need to have rest for the land and aliens' debts cannot be released because the Jubilee rules do not apply to them at all (Milgrom 2001, 2152). This is not completely a true statement because Lev 25:47–54 speak that resident aliens are also included in the Jubilee institution. For example, a wealthy resident alien needs to run his business according to the Jubilee year. The price of his purchase shall be made according to the Jubilee year. Also, a resident alien needs to release his indebted Israelite when the Jubilee year approaches. Thus, we see that resident aliens are not completely excluded from the institution of Jubilee.

The text in Lev 25:8–10 says that the Jubilee year is the fiftieth year and in that year liberty is proclaimed to the Israelites who have debts and the land and families are restored. The biblical text says that the Jubilee comes after the Sabbatical years, 7×7 is 49, i.e. in the 49th year is the Sabbatical year and the 50th year is the Jubilee year. However, the problem arises in counting and interpreting the following years. According to the rabbis the next Sabbatical year needs to be in the 57th year, i.e. seven years after the Jubilee year. But others do not agree with that because they count the Jubilee year as the first year of the Sabbatical year, i.e. the next Sabbatical year needs to be in the 56th year.

According to the Book of Jubilees¹²⁰ some scholars make a conclusion that the Jubilee year needs to be in the same year as the Sabbatical (Book of Jubilees 4:29, 10:16), i.e. the Jubilee year is a cycle of 49th years.¹²¹ Because we do not have clear historical evidence regarding the precise cyclical counting of every forty-nine or fifty years, we may conclude, according to the biblical text, that the Jubilee year was not a Sabbatical year. They are interrelated through their cyclical repetition. They reflect a notion of Sabbath as well and all of them

the Jubilee as synchronous with the seventh Sabbatical year. Some thematic similarities to Neh 5 infer to him the Persian period as the time of origin of this utopian regulation (Lefebvre 2003).

120 About the interpretation of the Jubilee in the Book of Jubilees and also Philo's and Flavius' interpretation see North (1954, 70–75).

121 Bergsma interprets Dan 9 as a Jubilee passage. Dan 9, like Is 61, associates the coming of a Messiah with the inauguration of a Jubilee. For him Dan 9 contains a very similar message as Jer 25:11; 29:10; Lev 26:34–35, 43; 2 Chron 36:20–21. A period of 490 years is ten jubilees for the restoration of the people and their surroundings before an inauguration of an eschatological Jubilee year (Bergsma 2007, 225–232).

consist a holy cyclical time. The Sabbath day, the Sabbatical and the Jubilee year are sacred times, which intention is to shape and restore the life of the land and the life of its inhabitants.

Some scholars have argued whether the year of Jubilee only postponed the debts, not cancelled them. It is most likely that through the return and restoration of his family land, the debtor permanently cancelled his debts at that time (Milgrom 2001, 2241) because the Jubilee legislation wants to protect a society from the debt, which is the greatest danger to the social establishment of the equality among the Israelites. Every person could experience once in a life time the practical influence of the Jubilee (Bergsma 2007, 81).

Nevertheless, there is still an open question why Leviticus does not give opportunity for forgiveness and liberation in the seventh year like Exodus and Deuteronomy. Why does Lev 25 provide forgiveness and give possibility for the new free life only in the Jubilee year and which kind of a period or situation would represent the Jubilee institution and its legislation? Milgrom correctly says that one of the main reasons was that Lev 25 wants to prolong the period of the loan.

I suggest that another pragmatic basis for the Jubilee (in addition to postponing Exodus' manumission of slaves from seven to fifty years) is the recognition that a fifty-year period would also give the creditor ample time to recoup his loan, except if it were contracted in the last years of the Jubilee. Thereby, he would avoid the problem acknowledged by the Deuteronomist that within a seven-year period many loans could not be repaid by the debtor's labor (Deut 15:9). Rather than holding out D's promise of heavenly reward (Deut 15:10), H extends the period of the loan until the Jubilee.

MILGROM 2001, 2174

The Jubilee year gives more time to repay loans, which only benefits the lender, i.e. the rich. Release of the land and debt release are interrelated in Lev 25. The land and the people are equally important for the Lord who is their exclusive owner. The sale is regarded like a lease (e.g. vv. 25–28). The land needs to have a rest in the year of Jubilee, i.e. the Jubilee law is connected with the restoration of the land as well. Any kind of work, such as sowing, pruning, reaping, and gathering are forbidden. The people need to trust the Lord that he will provide for their needs, especially in that time of the land fallow. The year prior to the land fallow shall bring forth enough for all of them while they will allow the land to lie fallow. The Lord is presented as the One who is deeply involved and active in his creation.

The institutions of redemption and the year of Jubilee are the tools that all property shall be returned to the original owner or family. If the rules of redemption are not practised, the enslaved person shall be released in the year of Jubilee.¹²² Also, the Jubilee year brings the release of all those who because of debts have been forced to sell themselves. That kind of person is considered more like a hired worker. A debt slave is not a slave for a life. Lev 25 underlines the importance of a fair treatment of those who are in bondage and their right of release if they are sold to an alien. The Israelites may belong only to the Lord and they are his servants. Their rights following from the Jubilee legislation are closely connected with their deliverance from slavery in Egypt (Deut 15:15; Lev 25:42, 55) (Sloan 1977, 4–9). Consequently, financial recovery, return to family and property bring deliverance and freedom. The land and the Jews could not be sold permanently.

Amit concludes that the legislation of the Jubilee is an editorial connection of some elements from Exod 21–23 and Deut 15, such as: fallow year, slavery, redemption, levitical cities and loans. Hence, the Jubilee law gives a new interpretation of the oldest legislations.¹²³ The writer of the Jubilee law was aware of the different older laws and their neglect and violation. Thus, he reshapes the earlier laws in order to show how a just and socio-economic society shall look like.

... it seems more logical to me that in our case the detail which exists in the Jubilee law results from a dependence on laws which preceded it, and the tradition of their violation, and from the ideological desire to enforce the new combination. In other words, a legislator who was aware of the problems inherent in implementing the Sabbatical year, of the nullification of the debt moratorium, and of the tendency not to free slaves during the seventh year, attempted, by means of the Jubilee law, to find a solution to these problems.

AMIT 1992, 55

According to Amit, it was hard to put the oldest legislation, such as the Sabbatical year, into practice in society because human beings very easily reject everything contradictory to their human nature.

122 The rules regarding the Levites and possessions in a walled city are different.

123 Some authors correctly interpret Lev 25 as exilic or post-exilic in its connection with Exod 21:1–7; 23:10–11; Deut 15:1–18. See e.g. Lemche (1976, 38–59); Kaufman (1984, 277–286); Gnuse (1985a: 43–48); Lohfink (1986, 110–123); Otto (1997, 26–63); Levinson (2005, 617–639); Levinson (2006, 281–324).

Certainly the main concern of the Jubilee law is a protection of the weak, unprivileged, poor and marginalised people.¹²⁴ If the Israelites want to apply the Jubilee legislation into their lives they need to respect the Lord's sovereignty, believe that the Lord will provide for them, know the story of exodus and the Lord's redeeming act towards them and practice the principle of redemption. If they observe the rules, all of them will be secured on the land. The land will yield its fruit because the Lord will order his blessing upon the land and upon them. "The Jubilee legislation constitutes in a sense the central expression of an original conception, according to which the Torah is presented as the foundation for a new equality between members of the community beyond their social and economic differences." (Nihan 2007, 558–559).

The most important feature of the Jubilee legislation is that the Lord is the owner of the land and his people. Each person and each individual family are an important social and economic entity for the institution of Jubilee (Fager 1993, 113). None shall lose property as a source for living. When permanent indebtedness threatened, ways of redemption or the Jubilee institution need to be found (Tidball 2005, 296).

The genius of the Jubilee legislation, therefore, lies in the dynamic tension which is persistent between certain aspects of cultic significance and its injunctions unto social justice. It was perhaps Philo who first noted and commented on the creative relationship between the social and cultic aspects of the Jubilee law, and thereby laid bare both this essential element of its inherent genius and perhaps something of its subsequent appeal to later eschatologically-oriented prophetic figures like Isaiah and Jesus/Luke ... The levitical text itself does not merely give evidence of containing both cultic and social elements in isolation, but implies an inextricable relationship between the two ...

SLOAN 1977, 13

The Jubilee legislation brings social and cultic significance and restoration of individual life and society as well.

124 Some church fathers, such as Origen, Chrysostom, Cyril, Theodoret, Hesychius, Eusebius, considered the Jubilee as a moral rule asking to share one's material and other goods to the poor. Also, the Jubilee is seen as a historical reality.

5.3 *Conclusion on the Year of Jubilee in Leviticus 25*

The Jubilee year started on the Day of Atonement when all sins were forgiven and the sanctuary was cleansed and consecrated. The Day of Atonement has the cultic and ritual significance while the Jubilee year has more socio-economic influence in society. The definitions of the Jubilee reflect different ways of understanding the Hebrew word *יובל*. Thus, the Jubilee year may be interpreted as a time, an act or meaning. The Jubilee can be defined as: the holy year of freedom every fifty years following seven cycles of seven years; an announcement of liberty throughout the land; liberty for all Israelite labourer, hired workers and slaves; return back to family and land; a measure for the equality of all Israelites; a national fixed festival; a cyclical calendar; restoration of land; a Sabbath rest for the people and the land; release from socio-economic servitude; a measure to prevent the loss of property, and to decrease a gap between the rich and the poor. The Jubilee laws want to protect a society from the problem of socio-economic and financial crisis.

The Jubilee year follows after the Sabbath years, in the 49th year is the Sabbath year while in the 50th year is the Jubilee year. We have noticed that the problem comes in counting and interpreting the following years, i.e. does the next Sabbath year need to be in the 57th year or in 56th year after the last Jubilee year. There is no a clear historical evidence about the precise cyclical counting. According to the biblical text, the Jubilee year is not a Sabbatical year. However, the Jubilee year and the Sabbatical year are connected through their cyclical repetition and they reveal a concept of Sabbath. The Jubilee year, the Sabbatical year and the Sabbath day consist a holy cyclical time. They are sacred times that reshape and revitalize the life of the people and the land.

Regarding Exod 21–23 and Deut 15, Lev 25 prolongs the period of loans. Also, the legislation of Jubilee prolongs the manumission of slaves from seven to fifty years. A fifty-year period gives an opportunity to the creditor to recoup his loan and for the debtor to repay his loans by his labour. A seven year period was not enough to repay loans and it was a problem to release slaves every seventh year, thus Lev 25 extends the period of the loan until the Jubilee. The Sabbatical year did not offer an opportunity for the freed slaves to return to their lost property and they stayed in the position of the landless people. Lev 25 connects release of the land with the release of debts. The legislation of Jubilee brings a new interpretation of the oldest legislations of Exod 21–23 and Deut 15 in order to present a just, socio-economic society.

The rules of Jubilee want to establish and sustain a righteous society in different historical times. They are rules for different systems and societies that support latifundism. The Jubilee legislation wants to protect the Israelite's society from the loss of the land. The Jubilee legislation is a well-known tradition

in Israel because it is the most radical socio-economic concept for a society. It means an establishment of a new, equal agricultural and righteous socio-economic society. Each member and each individual family are very important socio-economic entities for the Jubilee legislation. The Jubilee law protects first of all weak, needy, poor and marginalised people. Nobody shall lose a main source for living. In a case of permanent indebtedness, the institution of redemption and Jubilee must be applied. That means financial recovery, return to property and spiritual renewal. The Jubilee institution brings socio-economic meaning and restoration of an individual life and a life of society.

Regarding the dating of Jubilee legislations scholars have not found consensus. The Bible itself gives some suggestions that the legislation of Jubilee is recognised during the exilic and post-exilic time (e.g. Neh 5; Is 61:1–4; Jer 34). After the exegesis of the biblical texts, this study concludes that the legislation of Jubilee brings a new interpretation of the oldest legislations from Exod 21–23 and Deut 15. It reshapes those laws in order to show how a righteous and just society needs to look. The idea of Jubilee in Lev 25 refers to the people who were disappointed by the unstable socio-economic situation. It is most likely that the Jubilee legislation was developed over time in order to actualise its old values into the exilic or post-exilic time.

It is most likely that the priests during the exilic and post-exilic time made some corrections and additions to the existing Jubilee ideas. The idea of Jubilee was reshaped by the priests, in that time in order to protect the poor and unprivileged people. Also, they want people to respect the Lord's sovereignty in their lives. If the people will observe the Jubilee rules, then they will be secured on the land and the land will produce its fruit because the Lord will order his blessings upon them and the land.

However, even though we are not able to prove the implementation and practice of the Jubilee legislation every fifty years, we may conclude that the Jubilee provisions are waiting to be fully implemented. One of the main features of the Jubilee legislation is the proclamation of its eschatological fulfilment. It will bring liberation and harmony to the Lord's creation.

The Sabbath Day and the Year of the Lord's Favour in the Book of Isaiah 58 and 61

Exegetical analysis of the structure of Is 58 reveals the meaning of socio-economic justice in relation with the proper worship of the Lord. Acceptable religious practice of fasting and the proper keeping of the Sabbath day are closely connected with the socio-economic situation of society. This chapter also speaks about the anointed person and his message of the year of God's favour in Is 61. It gives an answer regarding the similar language of Lev 25:10; Is 58 and 61 concerning the year of Jubilee.

1 The Unity of the Book of Isaiah¹

According to his historical, literary and theological investigation, Duhm is the first person who emphasises that First-Isaiah comprises chapters 1–39, Deutero-Isaiah chapters 40–55 and Trito-Isaiah chapters 56–66.² Within the last few decades new trends and directions regarding the interpretation of the

1 About the critical attempts to account for the unity of Isaiah see Davies (1989, 106–114).

2 Conservative traditional scholarship interprets the book of Isaiah as a unified literary work connected to the prophet Isaiah of the eighth century B.C.E. They do not take into consideration different times when the book was written, especially the last part of the book that refers to the happenings long after the eighth century B.C.E. They have continued to defend the eighth-century prophet's authorship of the entire book. See e.g. Ridderbos (1985); Motyer (1999). However, most non-conservative scholars have been following Duhm's division of the book of Isaiah who makes the conclusion in his commentary on the book of Isaiah in 1892, that the book of Isaiah has three main parts. Duhm underlines that T1 is the latest part established during the postexilic time in Jerusalem before the time of Nehemiah (Duhm 1892; 1922). Nehemiah can be dated around 445 and 432 B.C.E. and Ezra cannot be later than 397 B.C.E. Thus, for most scholars it is most likely that T1 was dated between 537 and 445 B.C.E. e.g. McKenzie (1968, xix). In the following text we will use the abbreviations for First-Isaiah FI, DI for Deutero-Isaiah and T1 for Trito-Isaiah.

book of Isaiah³ can be found, especially on TI's relation to DI.⁴ It is obvious that TI has continuity with DI, especially with the theme of eschatological time coming into this world. TI is taking into consideration DI's promises regarding release of the captives, renovation of the land, comfort of all the needy, end of exploitation, harmonious existence and admiration from the other nations.

For instance, for Beuken chapters 56–66 mirror the earlier speeches of chapters 1–55 and the author of TI is a disciple and exegete of DI. However, TI interprets the mentioned themes in the earlier oracles in DI through his own tradition and in his time even though TI continues to present a similar theological framework to DI. TI brings also something new, such as a theme of the new time that will reshape some promises mentioned in DI. For example, in TI the Lord will establish a new righteous order among the people and throughout

3 E.g. Goulder has found eight divisions of the prophecy in the book of Isaiah that represents eight liturgical sections:

- 1) The reproaches (1–5);
- 2) the royal oracles (6–12);
- 3) oracles against the nations (13–20);
- 4) the attack of the nations (21:1–30:7);
- 5) the city of the Lord (30:8–39:8);
- 6) the good news of victory (40–48);
- 7) return from exile (49–57);
- 8) the triumphal homecoming (58–66) (Goulder 2004, 4–7).

Childs, well-known for his canonical criticism, emphasises a necessity of taking into consideration a unified literary corpus of the book of Isaiah (Childs 2001, 440). For him is very important to find coherence in the book of Isaiah in order to be able to discover theological and canonical meaning. Thus, he makes a conclusion that chapters 60–62 are from the early period of editorial work because they reflect the closest connection with DI (Childs 2001, 445). The non-historical prophecies in chapters 1–39 need to be interpreted and seen as the eschatological fulfilment in chapters 40–66 (Childs 1979, 325–330). Contrarily, Blenkinsopp correctly concludes that it is not always necessary to search for coherence and interconnections on a literary basis and unity in order to extract canonical and theological meaning (Blenkinsopp 2003, 29).

4 See also Beuken (1989); Hanson (1995); Childs (2001); Blenkinsopp (2003). For example, Blenkinsopp has noticed the deuteronomistic influence on Isaiah 56–66, especially in redefinition of the prophet figure as 'the Lord's servant'. He has identified the deuteronomistic theology in TI, for example in the description of necessity to respect the name of the Lord (e.g. Is 56:6), the formulation of the covenant vows (Deut 28:30, 47; Is 65:13–15, 21–22) and the portrayal of the temple as a house of prayer (1 Kgs 8:41–43; Is 56:1–7) (Blenkinsopp 2003, 37–38).

his action a righteous way of living will derive from that new order (Beuken 1989, 438). T1 refers to the expected promises of the new era, which are presented in the conditions of his specific eschatology. Deliverance from exile is presented as a foretaste of the Lord's promise of a new creation of heaven and earth (65:17 ff.) that will be fulfilled in the new age (Childs 2001, 447). T1 repeats the similar message from D1, i.e. in many ways T1 has a connection with the message of D1 but contains some parts that are completely distinct from it (Westermann 1969, 299, 353).

The proclamation of salvation in T1 is spoken after the return from the exile in Judah and Jerusalem.⁵ Also, T1 speaks especially about the theme of Israel's coming back and national reintegration (Westermann 1969, 296; Blenkinsopp 2003, 31). Therefore, chapters 56–66 refer to the time soon after the return from the Babylonian exile, the time when the community was demoralised and depressed without identity.⁶ By coming back, the Israelites started to re-establish their community and reshape their identity. Brueggemann underlines that T1's main concern was the liberation of social imagination, i.e. 'social construction' (Brueggemann 1998, 164).

5 About the authors and historical survey of Trito-Isaiah see e.g. Achtemeier (1982, 11–16); Blenkinsopp (2003, 44–66); Watts (2005, 804–807).

6 It has been accepted by some scholars that T1 may present the condition of the province of Judah in the fifth century during the time of Persian government. E.g. Blenkinsopp (2003, 42). The province of Judah (Yehud) was a small province in the western part of the Babylonian Empire. However, it is not possible to make a clear conclusion regarding the history of postexilic Judah because of insufficient available data. On the other hand, we have some historical evidence such as the return from exile (around 538 B.C.E.) and the renovation of the temple (around 515 B.C.E.) (Emmerson 1992, 59). T1 refers his message to the marginal, the oppressed, the powerless and the outcast community (cf. 56:8; 57:1, 15; 63:15; 66:2). This small community was rejected by a larger society because of its religious standpoint and way of life (66:5). Achtemeier says that this religious group was considered as enemies by the larger community that resulted in the Lord's anger upon the entire society. T1 speaks about this small, righteous group pronouncing at the same time the Lord's judgment on its unrighteous opponents (Achtemeier 1982, 17–18). It can be that T1 speaks about the establishment of the minor loyal group on one hand and about the socio-economic injustice and hypocritical religious practices on another hand. In order to become a member of the faithful, loyal community it is necessary to observe the covenant responsibility and to keep the Sabbath. These invisible and visible signs are the starting point for the coming of salvation (Blenkinsopp 2003, 84). The promises of T1 are restricted to the faithful and their obedience to the Lord. Justice, truthfulness and faithfulness are the main features for being the members of the Lord's nation and for their participation in the Lord's salvation (Smith 1995, 206).

Chapters 56–66 refer also the expectation of future things. That expectation shapes life in the present, especially the moral and socio-economic life of the faithful community and each person. The Lord will reveal himself through his action of liberation from oppression, renovation and rebuilding of cities and provinces. Also, he will judge the people (66:15–16), establish the new heavens and the new earth (65:17; 66:22), and reverse the fate of the godless and the faithful one (65:13–15; 66:24) (Blenkinsopp 2003, 89).

Chapters 60–62 are the central message of T1 (chapters 56–66). Most scholars agree that chapters 60–62 are closely linked and ascribed to the early post-exilic time. These chapters contain a message of salvation that is closely connected with the message of salvation described in D1.⁷ Chapters 60–62 speak about deliverance in order to prepare people for the coming of the new age of liberty. In chapters 60–62 people are described as holy inheritors of Abraham's blessings (60:21–22; 62:12).

61:1–3 present the centre and signature of the prophetic author of chapters 60–62 since there are 44 lines preceding and 44 lines following that unit. In these chapters the anointed prophet speaks about his prophetic action and his message addressed to the oppressed, the broken-hearted and the captives after the exilic period (Westermann 1969, 352; Blenkinsopp 2003, 39). Is 61:1 ff. speaks about the anointed one and his proclamation of good news while Is 62:1, 6 mention that this person will continue to speak about that until the Lord's complete salvation will come. Chapters 60–62 speak about the proclamation of coming salvation, which has been partially revealed in constant change during the history.⁸

The urgent call for socio-economic justice and proper worship is the main need for a society in order to become an authentic community. Thus, the message of Is 58 is an important for the prophetic vision of the year of the Lord's favour described in Is 61. The exegesis of Is 58 discovers the main demands for participation in the Lord's salvation and reveals the definitions of sin vs. socio-economic justice.

7 E.g. Smith (1995, 22–29); Childs (2001, 493–500); Blenkinsopp (2003, 203–245).

8 Also Westermann has found the concentric structure of T1. Chapters 60–62 are the main center surrounded by two sets of laments in chapters 59 and 63–64. The prologue is chapter 56 and the epilogue is chapter 66 (Westermann 1969). Strangers and eunuchs need to have their own rights in the community, which means that the Lord's people will incorporate in himself not only Jews but also others (56:1–8). The text is not clear when they will become members of that community. The Lord's heralds will proclaim the Lord's glorious coming, his theophany and the final *parousia* in foreign lands (66:18–19) (Blenkinsopp 2003, 82–83).

In the following interpretation of Is 58 and 61, this study is going to use the canonical approach to the book of Isaiah.⁹

2 Social Justice as a Request for an Authentic Community: Isaiah 58

- 1 קרא בגרון אל־תחשֹׁד בשׁוֹפֵר הָרֶם קוֹלְךָ וְהִגַּד לְעַמִּי פִשְׁעֵם וּלְבֵית יַעֲקֹב חַטָּאתָם:
- 2 וְאוֹתֵי יוֹם יוֹם יִדְרָשׁוּ וְדָעַת דְּרָכֵי יַחֲפָצֹן כְּגֹי אֲשֶׁר־צָדָקָה עָשָׂה וּמִשְׁפָּט אֱלֹהֵיו לֹא עֲזָב יִשְׁאֲלוּנִי מִשְׁפָּטֵי־צֶדֶק קִרְבַּת אֱלֹהִים יַחֲפָצֹן:
- 3 לָמָּה צָמְנוּ וְלֹא רָאִיתָ עֲנִינוּ נַפְשָׁנוּ וְלֹא תָדַע הֵן בְּיוֹם צַמְכֶם תִּמְצְאוּ־חֶפֶץ וְכָל־עֲצִיבֵיכֶם תִּנְגְּשׁוּ:
- 4 הֵן לָרִיב וּמִצָּח תִּצְמוּ וְלִהְכֹּת בְּאֲגָרְךָ רִשָּׁע לֹא־תִצְמוּ כִּיּוֹם לְהַשְׁמִיעַ בְּמִרוֹם קוֹלְכֶם:
- 5 הִכְזֹּה יִהְיֶה צוֹם אֲבֹתֶרְהוּ יוֹם עֲנֹת אָדָם נַפְשׁוֹ הִלְכָּךְ כְּאִגְמָן רֹאשׁוֹ וְשָׁק וְאֶפְרַי יֵצִיעַ הַלְזָה תִּקְרָא־צוֹם וַיּוֹם רִצּוֹן לִיהוָה:
- 6 הֲלוֹא זֶה צוֹם אֲבָחֶרְהוּ פִתְחֵל חֲרָצְבוֹת רִשָּׁע הִתֵּר אֲגָדוֹת מוֹטָה וְשִׁלַּח רְצוּצִים חֲפָשִׁים וְכָל־מוֹטָה תִּנְתְּקוּ:
- 7 הֲלוֹא פָרַס לָרֹעֵב לַחֲמֹד וְעֲנִיִּים מְרוּדִים תִּבְיֵא בֵּית כִּי־תִרְאֶה עֶרֶם וְכִסִּיתוּ וּמִבְּשָׂרְךָ לֹא תִתַּעֲלֶם:
- 8 אֲזִי יִבְקַע בְּשַׁחַר אֹרֶךְ וְאֶרְכֶּכֶת מִהֵרָה תִצְמַח וְהִלָּךְ לְפָנֶיךָ צִדְקָךְ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה יִסְפָּד:
- 9 אֲזִי תִקְרָא וִיהוָה יַעֲנֶה תִשְׁוַע וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי אִם־תִּסִּיר מִתּוֹכְךָ מוֹטָה שְׁלַח אֲצַבֵּעַ וְדִבַּר־אֲנִי:
- 10 וְתִפַּק לָרֹעֵב נַפְשׁוֹ וְנִפְשׁ נִעְנָה תִשְׁבִּיעַ וּזְרַח בַּחֲשֹׁךְ אֹרֶךְ וְאֶפְלֹתְךָ בְּצִהָרִים:
- 11 וְנִחַד יְהוָה תִּמְיֹד וְהִשְׁבִּיעַ בְּצִחְצֻחוֹת נַפְשׁוֹ וְעֲצֻמְתֵּיךָ יִחְלִיץ וְהִיִּיתָ כְּגֹן רוֹה וְכִמְצוּא מַיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִכְזָבוּ מִימּוֹ:
- 12 וּבָנוּ מִמֶּךָ חֲרָבוֹת עוֹלָם מוֹסְדֵי דוֹר־דּוֹר תִּקְוֹמָם וְקָרָא לְךָ גֵּרָר פָּרֵץ מִשְׁבֵּב נְתִיבוֹת לְשִׁבְתָּ:

9 E.g. Liebreich (1955/1956, 259–277; 1956/1957, 114–138); Sawyer (1977, 112–118); Childs (1979, 325–338); Brueggemann (1984, 89–107); Dumbrell (1985, 111–128); Watts (2005). Holistic interpretation, for instance, gives a possibility to discover the common themes of the book of Isaiah, such as: Israel's relationship to the Lord, the places and destiny of Israel, other foreign nations and non-Israelite individuals. For instance, Brueggemann has found the unity of the book in a way that chapters 1–39 and 40–55 represent 'a critique of ideology' and 'a communal embrace of hurt and pain which leads to new hope' while the last part of the book, chapters 56–66, present 'a liberation of social imagination' (Brueggemann 1998). It is indicative that the framework of the book of Isaiah refers to the foreign nations (1–2:2–4; 66:18–24). The importance of the gentiles and foreigners especially in the last part of the book is obvious. They will come to Jerusalem (66:18), get a sign (66:19a) in order to become messengers of the Lord's glory (66:19b) (Davies 1989, 93–95).

13 אִם-תִּשָּׁב מִשְׁבֶּת רִגְלֶךָ עֲשׂוֹת חֲפָצֶיךָ בַּיּוֹם קִדְשִׁי וְקִרְאֵת לִשְׁבֹּת עֲנֵג לְקֹדֶשׁ יְהוָה
מִכְבֹּד וְכִבְדָּתוֹ מֵעֲשׂוֹת דְּרָכֶיךָ מִמִּצְוֹת חֲפָצֶיךָ וְדִבְרֵי דְבָר:
14 אֲזִי תִתְעַנֵּג עַל-יְהוָה וְהִרְפִּיתִיךָ עַל-בְּמֹותֵי אֲרֶץ וְהִאֲכַלְתִּיךָ נַחֲלֹת יַעֲקֹב אֲבִיד כִּי פִי
יְהוָה דִּבֶּר:

- 1 Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins.
- 2 Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God.
- 3 "Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?" Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers.
- 4 Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high.
- 5 Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?
- 6 Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?
- 7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
- 8 Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
- 9 Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
- 10 if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.
- 11 the Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.
- 12 Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

- 13 If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath, from pursuing your own interests on my holy day; if you call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honourable; if you honour it, not going your own ways, serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs;
- 14 then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

2.1 *The Structure of Isaiah 58*

The chapter 58¹⁰ has three 'if-then' structures (vv. 6–9a, 9b–12, and 13–14) and according to the literal structure, we have found the main parts of chapter 58:

- I. Vv. 1–2
- II. Vv. 3–5
- III. Vv. 6–9a
- IV. Vv. 9b–12
- V. Vv. 13–14

2.1.1 Isaiah 58:1–2

These two verses speak about the major problem of society, which is in a deep conflict because of different kinds of behaviour; one was expressed in worship of the Lord and another in everyday communal life. So, in the beginning of this chapter the speaker is called to lift up and shout loudly, his voice like a trumpet announcing the transgressions and sins of the people. The image of a trumpet may indicate the urgent situation or the beginning of the Jubilee year even though Is 58 does not speak directly about that legislation.¹¹ There can be found

10 "One of the most powerful challenges to moral action is to be found in ch. 58. With the exception of vv. 1 and 4, this is framed not in terms of condemnation but of exhortation. The radical reinterpretation here of the customary practice of fasting is concerned entirely with matters of social justice, in particular the exploitation of workers (v. 3) and care for the deprived and marginalised of society." (Emmerson 1992, 102).

11 The Jubilee background for Is 58 has been argued by Hanks. Here are some of his arguments: the unit Is 56–58 is framed by a Sabbath context similar like the Jubilee legislation that is embodied in the Sabbath instruction (Lev 25:2–7; 26:2, 34–35). It can be seen as a special Sabbatical year or an institution connected with the Sabbatical year cycle; Is 58:3–6 mentions what means proper fasting. On the Day of Atonement (Lev 23:26–32), the Jubilee was proclaimed (Lev 25:9); Is 58:1 'lift up your voice like a trumpet to declare to the people their sins'. The Jubilee and the Day of Atonement involved reflection on sins and were announced by trumpet (Lev 23:24; 25:9). The phrase, an 'acceptable day' in Is 58:5, has two

some links between the Jubilee legislation and the message of chapter 58. For example, Is 58:1 mentions a trumpet in a similar way as Lev 25:9–10 where the year of Jubilee is announced by the sound of a trumpet. Furthermore, some scholars make connections between the Jubilee year and the messianic time through the metaphor of a trumpet.¹² In this context, the sound of trumpet may denote the Day of Atonement (cf. Lev 25:9), the Sabbath day or the day of fasting (e.g. Joel 2:15 ff.) (Kooile 2001, 120, 122). Concerning these events, also the year of Jubilee may be announced as well.

58:1 and 61:1 ff. both speak about a speaker who is commissioned to bring the Lord's message, i.e. to speak in the Lord's name. However, he does not speak in his own name in chapter 58, which is established as a dialogue between the Lord and his people. The opening line is addressed to a speaker to announce the transgressions and sins of the people that is one of the major difficulties in this chapter. The people have sinned throughout their rebellion, transgression and resistance to the Lord.

The Hebrew word פֶּשַׁע¹³ is used here as rebellion or transgression against the Lord. In this case, Israel is accused of rebellion in a way going beyond the boundaries of the Lord's laws, which is recognised in socio-economic exploitation of neighbours. The Hebrew word תַּעֲזָבָה used in v. 1 and elsewhere in the

textual parallels with Is 49:8 ('an acceptable season') and Is 61:2 ('the acceptable year'). The 'acceptable year' of Jubilee begins on an 'acceptable day', the Day of Atonement; the freeing of debt-slaves (Is 58:6,9; Lev 25:39–55); the protest against the exploitation of workers (Is 58:3; Lev 25:36, 39, 43, 46, 53); the sharing of food and shelter with the needy (Is 58:7, 10; Lev 25:35–38); the prohibition on charging interest (Is 58:4; Lev 25:35–38); the promised blessings (Is 58:8, 11, 13, 14; Lev 25:2–7; 18–19) (Hanks 1983, 99–102).

12 Also the blowing a trumpet will be performed when the Messiah will enter gloriously in the holy city (e.g. Zech 9:9–10, 14–16). The sound of a trumpet was heard when people came back to Jerusalem to worship the Lord (Is 27:13). Also, Jesus' second coming will be characterised by the sound of a trumpet (Matt 24:31; 1 Cor 15:52).

13 This word is used as:

- a) transgression against individuals (Gen 31:36; 50:17; Exod 22:8 (heb 7); 1 Sam 24:12; 25:28; Prov 10:19; 17:19; 28:24; 29:6, 16, 22).
- b) transgression of nation or against nation (Am 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1).
- c) transgression against the Lord (Job 31:33; 32:5; 34:37; 35:6; Ps 36:2; 51:5; 107:17; Is 57:4; 58:1; 59:12, 20; Ezek 18:22, 28, 30, 31; 21:29; 33:12; Mic 1:5, 13; 3:8; Am 5:12).
- d) guilt of transgression (Job 33:9; 34:6; 37:23; Ps 5:11; 19:14; 59:4; Is 24:20; Ezek 14:11; 33:10; 37:23).
- e) punishment for transgression (Dan 8:12, 13; 9:24).
- f) offering for transgression (Mic 6:7) (Brown, Driver, Briggs 1999, 833).

book of Isaiah, means sin against the Lord.¹⁴ An acceptable description of sin in Israel is disobedience of the Lord's will and mistreatment or disrespect of the rights of other people. The rebellion and sin have a deep impact on the people's inner life and attitudes and distort their relationship with the Lord and others.¹⁵ The Lord is not responsible for the broken relationship with his chosen people because he is the highest authority, faithful and righteous all the time. The Israelites are the guilty ones for their rebellion against the Lord and his covenant and authority.

Furthermore, transgression creates not only a gap between the Lord and the individual but also produces distortions within the members of society and in individuals. These distortions can be recognised as insincere worship, dishonesty, laziness, apathy, deceitful way of living, illness, defilement, corruption, anger and enmity.¹⁶

The Lord's response to rebellion and sins may be judgment¹⁷ or reconciliation and salvation. All those who will be ready to respond to the Lord's calling and acknowledge, repent and cast away their sins will be forgiven and redeemed.¹⁸ In v. 1 the speaker is called by the Lord to expose the people's sins and rebellion. The people have two alternatives. One alternative is to accept the speaker's announcement regarding their sins and repent and the second one is to ignore that speech and continue to live in the old, corrupted way and face the consequences. However, the Lord wants to save his people.¹⁹ The people are called to confess and repent of their sins and the sins of their community.²⁰ Transgression and sins are seen as an extremely dangerous matter and could be taken care of by the Lord. Only by his mercy and love, both individuals and people can be transformed and released from their sins. The following verses bring some conditions: what they need to do and change in order to become transformed individuals and an authentic faithful society.

14 E.g. 1:18; 3:9; 16:10, 18; 30:1, 14, 15; 40:2; 50:20; 58:1; 59:2,12.

15 E.g. Ps 37:38; 51:13; Prov 28:21; Is 1:28; 48:8; 59:13; Jer 2:8,29; Ezek 2:3; Hos 7:13; 8:1; 14:9; Am 4:4; Zeph 3:11.

16 E.g. Job 34:6; Ps 36:1 (heb 2); 107:17; Prov 12:13; 17:19; 28:24; 29:22; Is 24:20; 58:1; Ezek 14:11.

17 E.g. Ps 37:38; Is 1:28; Dan 8:23.

18 E.g. Is 46:8; 53:12; Jer 3:13; 33:8; Ezek 18:31; Hos 7:13; Zeph 3:11.

19 Also, the Suffering Servant forgives and redeems all those who are willing to repent their sins (e.g. Job 7:21; 8:4; Is 43:25; 53:8; Ezek 18:22; 33:12; 37:23). The Bible gives us several records how the Lord forgave the sins of his people and individuals (e.g. Ps 32:1; 65:3; Prov 19:11; Is 43:25; 44:22; 53:5; 59:20) (Harris, Waltke and Archer 2006, 1846, 1846a וְשָׁפַט).

20 E.g. Lev 16:16, 21.

V. 2 explains that even though the people are rebellious and sinful yet they delight and enjoy worshipping the Lord. That kind of worship is a hypocritically manipulative worship, which violates the true character and intentions of the Lord mainly because of distorted socio-political-economic relationships (Brueggemann 1998, 186–188). The people worshipped the Lord in a way as if they were a nation that practised righteousness and kept the Lord's commandments. Furthermore, they ask for righteous judgments. It is most likely that they ask from the Lord judgments, i.e. legal decisions on their behalf against others. They delight to worship the Lord but their motives are wrong. They want to get benefit just for themselves.

This study deals with the issue of socio-economic justice. The Hebrew word צדק in v. 2 and its derivatives can mean justice, rightness, righteousness, just, justification, justify. It does not indicate so much the abstract concept of justice as a right behaviour and proper standing within a society. Some aspects of right behaviour have been ruined by the rebellious and sinful behaviour of the people despite their piety to the Lord. The following verses speak about the main causes and solutions of that problem.

2.1.2 Isaiah 58:3–5

Vv. 3–5 speak about complaints of worshippers who fast and humble themselves in order to get the Lord's attention. The Lord reflects on the people's devotion and cites the complaint of people in its direct form. Particularly, the text brings a lot of questions regarding ineffective fasting.²¹ The main reason for fasting here was to impress and get advantage from the Lord. However, fasting of the people did not cause the Lord to accept and recognise it as an honest act. He did not pay attention only to the afflictions of the body. Is 58 underlines that for the Lord a true fast needs to include seeking for justice and righteousness, i.e. their behaviour needs to include all three mentioned aspects of right relationships. First of all, they need to take care of the hungry, the naked and

21 The Bible speaks about the practice of fasting very often. Fasting is expressed in depriving the body of nourishment. It can be further expressed in putting on sackcloth and ashes (Esther 4:3). Usually it has lasted from sunrise until sunset (e.g. 2 Sam 1:12), for seven days (e.g. 1 Sam 31:13), for many days (e.g. 2 Sam 12:16 ff.) or for forty days (e.g. Matt 4:2; Lk 4:2). Furthermore, national fasting has been practiced in certain days, especially during the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29, 31; 23:27–32). The Book of Zechariah mentions the four yearly fasts, which were designated as national fasts (Zech 8:19). Fasting and mourning were distinctive religious practices from prayer or sacrificial rituals especially in the post-exilic time.

the poor.²² Absence of helping those in need reflects insincere piety, i.e. false fasting (Blenkinsopp 2003, 178).

The speaker emphasises the paradox of announcing sins to the people who look like devoted worshippers of the Lord. However, their way of worship is not recognised by the Lord because their religious act is superficial and manipulative. They want to gain a personal benefit while they delight in worship despite the fact that they also delight in exploiting and oppressing their labourers. Even though they have tried to humble themselves through abstaining from eating, bowing down heads and lying in sackcloth²³ and ashes, their religious practices are done in hypocrisy. It can be that in this context of Is 58 an external practice of piety was done correctly but without a personal internal change which generates, among others things, a righteous relationship between the people in society.

The religious act of fasting, which can indeed be a serious act of faith, is here only a calculation. Moreover, even while this public piety is practiced (even as we speak!), labourers are oppressed. The final line of verse 3 lets us see both the general argument of the poem and the actual substance of the “rebellion”, the “transgression”, of verse 1. This is worship without *public ethics* that pertains to *economics*. Worship not congruent with humane economic practice is bad worship!

BRUEGGEMANN 1998, 188

The major problem here is that the worshippers do not allow access to the necessary resources for life to some members of society. The fast of these worshippers is connected with their unjust behaviour, which distorts socio-economic relations. In the framework of socio-economic injustice, vv. 3b–5 and vv. 6–14 are directed against wrong religious fasting practices. Vv. 3b–5 underline direct rejection of false fasting practices while vv. 6–14 explain what an acceptable and true fast is. Thus, it is obvious that the speaker connects the religious practice of fasting with the socio-economic situation of society. Commercial exploitation and socio-economic injustice have an effect on religious practices.

²² Also Jer 14:12; Zech 7:5.

²³ Sackcloth was used as a garment made by a thick coarse material. It was a cloth similar to a bag which held grain. Sackcloth was worn by mourners and sometimes by the prophets who preached the message of repentance (e.g. Gen 37:34; 2 Kgs 1:8; Ps 30:11; Is 37:1; Matt 3:4; Rev 11:3). Sometimes when people fasted they also tore their clothes, cried out to the Lord, put ashes on their heads or sat in them (e.g. Job 1–2; Neh 1:4; Dan 9:3).

If people neglect justice and righteousness in their society then their religious activities are nullified, worthless and rejected (Smith 1995, 108, 110). 58:5 states that the fast day needs to be a day acceptable to the Lord.

The Hebrew word $\square\text{y}$ can mean here a twenty-four hour time because a true fast described in Is 58:3–6 is very similar with the legislation of the Day of Atonement and its regulation regarding the practise of fasting (Lev 16:29–31). The Day of Atonement was considered as a day of fasting and day of confession of sins. Here the fast day needs to be a day acceptable to the Lord (58:5). It is interesting that the Jubilee year is described as an acceptable and favourable year of the Lord (Is 61:2) and it starts on the Day of Atonement (Lev 25:9).

However, this word $\square\text{y}$ in this context is very similar to the Greek word $\kappa\alpha\iota\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ ²⁴ in the New Testament (Knight 1985, 23). A day acceptable to the Lord may include in itself a definite time, a period of time, the proper time, the last time or an eschatological time.²⁵ Nevertheless, the most important thing here is that a day acceptable to the Lord is a day connected with the message of salvation, the time of freedom, release and balanced righteous relationships.

What is a true fast? It is 'a day acceptable to the Lord.' What such a day entails is clear. It is described in 61:1–3, a passage repeated in Jesus' reading from the Isaiah scroll in the synagogue in Nazareth (Lk 4:16–21). It is the Jubilee, the time in which God's *mišpāt*, or order of compassionate justice, is restored. It is time of healing, of remission of debts, of release from slavery, of return to one's confiscated property. This passage thus locates God's central concern in the exercise of justice and the practice of compassion.

HANSON 1995, 205

Hanson correctly concludes that an 'acceptable day' is the same time as is described in Is 61:1–3 and Lk 4:16–21. That day means the Jubilee when the Lord's righteousness, justice and compassion are revealed among his people.

24 The word $\kappa\alpha\iota\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ has a variety of meanings, such as point of time, period of time, seasons, acceptable time (Lk 21:36; Acts 14:17; 2 Cor 6:2; Eph 6:38; 2 Tim 3:1), present time (Rom 3:26; 13:11), from time to time (John 5:4), the proper, favourable time (Matt 24:45; Mk 12:2; Lk 20:10; John 7:6, 8; Acts 24:25), opportunity (Gal 6:10; Col 4:5; Heb 11:15), definite time (Matt 13:30; 26:18; Mk 11:13; Lk 8:13; 19:44; Gal 4:10; 6:9; 2 Tim 4:6), or the last times (Matt 8:29; 16:3; Mk 10:30; 13:33; Lk 21:8; 1 Cor 7:29; Eph 1:10; Rev 1:3) (Gingrich and Danker 1983, 98).

25 2 Kgs 20:17; Am 2:16; 5:18; 9:11.

2.1.3 Isaiah 58:6–9a

V. 6 says “to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke.” The Hebrew word מֹסָה means yoke.²⁶ The word ‘yoke’ is used here twice in order to show that some members of society are exploited by others. They are paralysed and under the ‘yoke’ because of financial debts. The chains of injustice, the cords of the yoke and any kind of oppression mean that the socio-economic misconduct treats people like animals. Thus, this kind of exploitation needs to be completely eliminated and debt slaves need to be released. Actions and treatment that include loosing bonds of injustice, untying the thongs of the yoke, setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke, will bring social liberation and establish a righteous society.

We may see that Is 58:6 has a similarity with the legislation of Jubilee year, i.e. with the cancelation of debts and practicing the year of the Lord’s favour described in Lev 25:8ff. and Is 61:1–4 (Brueggemann 1998, 189). The institution of Jubilee embodies in itself also the concept of socio-economic justice, i.e. righteous relationships between people and the Lord.

V. 6 clearly explains what a true and acceptable fast that pleases the Lord is. Individual relationship with the Lord is closely interrelated with relations and actions directed toward other people. Because of debts, some oppressed members are placed under a yoke and they have an unequal position subject to others. They are treated as slaves. Accordingly, an acceptable fasting and worship would include loosing the bonds of enslavement and wickedness, breaking every yoke, setting the oppressed free. Acts of justice must be performed in order to abolish exploitation of the poor and to stop their mistreatment by rich, cruel and selfish individuals. A true freedom and fast that the Lord accepts need to include sharing the food with the hungry, clothing the poor and needy, providing home for the refugee and the displaced people (v. 7). Foods, clothes, home are the main existential resources important for human life. “By virtue of the association between social deprivation and the language of captivity, the language of captivity in Is 58:6 has become a metaphor for social remediation in v. 7; the concrete actions of v. 7 provide the reference for the metaphoric language of v. 6.” (Halvorson-Taylor 2011, 147).

26 It can be found in Lev 26:13 as a metaphor for the slavery in Egypt. In Jer 27–28 is used as an image for the Babylonian enslavement. Nehemiah recognised the roots of slavery as a yoke in the aspiration of corrupted leaders and the greed of fellow Jews. Thus, he prohibited the putting the yoke of unjust interest on loans and ordered the return of lands and homes to all those who had lost them for unfair debt (Neh 5:7–12) (Watts 2005, 843).

To be homeless means to be rootless in society. A similar rootless situation happened to the Israelites in exile. Thus, the returnees from exile came back to their homeland where they were able to set down their roots again. All of them need to give the same opportunity to all others in order to establish their own place of living and belonging. In order to do that, the main existential things for life must be provided for all members of society. According to 58:7, the main resources for life, such as secure places, food and clothing must be provided for the needy and the poor. Deprivation and captivity must be abolished in order to re-establish and renovate society. This appalling socio-economic situation recalls the situation of Neh 5:5. Furthermore, this kind of solidarity corresponds with the legislation of Jubilee as well (Lev 25:35–37, 47–49). Socio-economic rights of all members of society must be interrelated with religious devotional practises of that society and the individuals. Brueggemann correctly concludes “the devotion the Lord desires is solidarity that troubles with the elemental requirements of economic life for every member of the community.” (Brueggemann 1998, 189).

Vv. 6–7 and 8–9a are closely connected with the condition ‘if-then’. ‘If’ they loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, to break every yoke, to share bread with the hungry, to bring the homeless poor into the house, to cover the naked, not to hide from their own kin, ‘then’ their light will break forth, their healing will spring up quickly, they will call and the Lord will answer them, they will cry for help and he will help them. Contrarily to a hypocritical worship, which is performed only to get personal advantage from the Lord while exploiting others, here a true acceptable worship is preconditioned by the action of socio-economic justice. All those who provide and give protection and safety to the people in need are seen and accepted by the Lord. That kind of practice, which brings wellbeing to all members of society, is honoured by the Lord because he protects all those who work for the safety and wellbeing of others.

The expression ‘let the oppressed go free and break every yoke’ in Is 58:6 is an evidence reference to the institution of the Jubilee year. The idea of setting the oppressed and slaves free refers to release from any sort of oppression, especially bondage in the exile. The Jubilee legislation in Lev 25:55 concludes with an important announcement that the Israelites are only the Lord’s servants whom he delivered and brought out from the exilic land of Egypt. Also, care for needy, homeless, hungry, naked in Is 58:7 corresponds with the regulations for the Jubilee year in Lev 25:35–37, 47–49, especially to take the homeless into their house and to provide for the hungry food without charge. Furthermore, the phrase ‘not to hide yourself from your own kin’ in Is 58:7 is very similar to the idea of ‘brother’ in the redemption legislation in Lev 25:25, 35–37, 47.

If people do justice and share their goods with the needy, then their light and healing will come from the Lord. The Hebrew word אור 'light' usually refers to the shining of the sun but here it has a metaphorical meaning. In v. 8 the idea of light deals with light that relates to the wellbeing of healthy society.²⁷ It is most likely that their light, which will break forth like the dawn, is connected with obedience to the teachings of the Lord and activity of socio-economic justice. Light and healing are the images of salvation (e.g. 60:1; 62:2). The coming salvation is presented symbolically as the new pious circumstance of inwardly changed people (Childs 2001, 478–479). Right relationships between people and between people and the Lord bring healing and salvation to all members of society. They also reveal socio-economic justice and accepted proper worship as well. With the coming of light and healing will come a rear guard of righteousness and glory.²⁸

Most scholars agree that the Lord's glory is a technical term for the Lord's presence, which is obvious in this verse as well.²⁹ The Lord's presence is very

27 Usually the phrases like 'light of life' or 'the land of the living' mean being alive (Job 33:30; Ps 56:13 (heb 14)). The psalmist describes the Lord as his light and salvation (e.g. Ps 27:1) while the prophet Isaiah describes the Messiah as a light to the nations. Through him the Lord's salvation reaches the ends of the earth. Also the Messiah is a light shining in a place of deep darkness (Is 9:2 (heb 1); 42:6; 49:6).

28 The Lord's theophanies are described with this word and its derivatives as well. In the Old Testament we may find different kinds of theophanies, such as theophanies to Moses (Exod 33:18, 22; Num 14:22; Deut 5:21), theophanies of the Exodus (Exod 16:7; 16:10; 24:16, 17; 40:34, 35; Lev 9:6, 23; Num 14:10; 16:19; 17:7; 20:6; 2 Chron 5:14; 7:1–3; 1 Kgs 8:11), theophanies to Ezekiel (Ezek 1:28; 3:12, 23; 8:4; 9:3; 10:4, 18, 19; 11:22, 23; 43:2, 4, 5; 44:4), theophany as the Lord's glory which sanctifies the tent (Exod 29:43; Ps 26:8). The Lord's glory is seen and recognised in his name of glory (Ps 72:19; Is 3:8; Neh 9:5), and in the temple (Ps 57:6, 12; 63:3; 113:4). The Lord's glory is described in the Old Testament as great, everlasting, above all the earth, the whole earth is full of the Lord's glory, the heavens declare his glory, he reigns in his glory, he will appear in his glory, the land will see his glory, he will dwell in the land in his glory, the Lord's glory will arise and be seen upon Jerusalem, the Lord's glory will be in the midst of Jerusalem, the temple will be filled with his glory, the whole earth will be filled with a knowledge of the Lord's glory, the glory will be declared among the nations, all people will see the Lord's glory (e.g. Num 14:21; Ps 19:2; 24:7, 8, 9, 10; 29:3; 63:3; 72:19; 85:10; 97:6; 102:16, 17; 108:6; 113:4; 145:5, 12; Is 6:3; 11:10; 24:23; 35:2; 40:5; 59:19; 60:1, 2; 66:18, 19; Ezek 43:3; Hab 2:14; Hag 2:7) (Brown, Driver, Briggs 1999, 459).

29 The Hebrew noun כְּבוֹד appears 199 times in the Hebrew Bible. The primary meaning is glory, abundance, honour. It can have several categories, such as a high dignified position, respect, an object of reverence, a means of self-reference and the Lord's glory (Hundley 2009, 33). The book of Isaiah speaks differently about the Lord's glory. According to the prophet Isaiah, the glory of the Lord will be revealed and seen in the land (Is 35:2). That

often combined with his dwelling.³⁰ Is 58:8 presents the Lord's glory in a specific way as the reward of Israel. Righteous, just and compassionate deeds and relationships will be rewarded by the glory of the Lord that will become their protection.

Hundley correctly concludes that the glory does not encapsulate completely the Lord's presence even though that glory is inextricably correlated with the divine presence. That glory is the only visible aspect of the presence of the Lord himself, his authority and high-standing (Hundley 2009, 35). Therefore, in this context the Lord's glory is the reward of Israel and will be revealed in his presence and protection. The idea of being indwelt by the Lord's glory brings an ongoing transformation of the believers. The constant guidance of the Lord leads human beings in the right godly way and transforms them into the likeness and image of the Lord. In order to receive the Lord's glory as a reward and to share in his glory, human beings need to participate in the divine nature,³¹ i.e. they need to be exalted in the life of the Lord (Habets 2006, 167).

glory will arise and be seen upon Jerusalem (Is 60:1–2) and it will be declared among the other nations and all will see it (Is 66:18, 19). The glory of the Lord will reign before elders and all nations and kings will revere the glory of the Lord (Is 24:23; 59:19). Also, Messiah will dwell in glory (Is 11:10).

- 30 The Hebrew word שָׁכַן means dwell, tabernacle. It is used 129 times in the Old Testament. The Lord may dwell on Mount Zion, among his people, in Jerusalem (Exod 25:8; Deut 12:11; Ps 74:2; Zech 8:3). His presence dwells among the people, i.e. the Lord's glory is to dwell in the land (Exod 24:16; Ps 85:9 (heb 10)). The Lord dwells among his people in the tabernacle, house or tent according to an anthropomorphic theology of the Priestly source (Exod 25–31; 35–40), i.e. the most frequent occurrences where the Lord's glory has a visible appearance have to do with the tabernacle and with Ezekiel's temple (e.g. Exod 16:10; 40:34; Ezek 9:3). His dwelling in the tabernacle or the temple is described as his glory (Exod 40:35). The Priestly source presents the Lord's presence in a corporeal sense while the Deuteronomic source speaks about the Lord's name that dwells in the tabernacle (Deut 12:11; 14:23; 16:2, 6, 11; 26:2). P presents the tabernacle as the Lord's dwelling where the Lord and his people meet for worship. Moses received the law from the Lord on the mountain Sinai that was surrounded by the Lord's glory. Once on Sinai, the glory of the Lord comes and fills the tabernacle. The Lord's glory is closely connected with the Lord himself and his presence among his people. The glory of the Lord reflects his holiness as well. In order to be in his presence and experience his glory and holiness, people need to obey his commandments and let that his character be manifested in them (e.g. Num 14:10; Ezra 10:11; Is 6:3). In contrast to P, D uses the idea of the Lord's name in order to avoid localising the Lord just in one place. Thus, that kind of dwelling shall be seen as a dialectic concept (Harris, Waltke and Archer 2006, 2387.0, 2387a, 2387b, 2387c, שָׁכַן שָׁכַן שָׁכַן שָׁכַן, מִשְׁכָּן).
- 31 “Adam's failure to enter into life and preserve the status of an ‘oak of righteousness’ (Is 61:3) derived not so much from a desire to ‘become like God,’ (God did, after all, create

V. 9a confirms that the Lord will respond and help all those who will cry and call for his help. The Lord is attentive to the lives of the hungry, the homeless, the naked and the needy. Also, he is present in the lives of those who honestly delight in his ways and his ordinances and who practice justice. Wellbeing of healthy society can be seen and observed throughout the condition of the weakest member of that society. The Lord in his glory will be present in an authentic society, which has neighbourly attentiveness (Brueggemann 1998, 190–191). Thus, it is correct to conclude that while human beings have neighbourly attentiveness and participate in the life of, then the Lord's glory will become their real guard.

2.1.4 Isaiah 58:9B–12

Vv. 9b–12 have also a conditional 'if-then' structure. They need to remove the yoke, to stop pointing the finger and speak evil things, to offer food to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted. Removal of yoke means to stop the exploitation of others and to release all those who are under the yoke of debts (vv. 3, 6). Social discrimination, gossip, accusations, manipulations, bullying and similar things must be completely gone from a society. The main resources for life must be honestly and willingly shared with the needy and the poor. 'If' all those conditions will be fulfilled 'then' the Lord will guide and satisfy their needs. All of them will be renewed, fruitful and blessed with the Lord's abundance. They will live in harmony, freedom, prosperity and peace in a society of righteousness and compassion.

V. 11 confirms that the Lord will guide them continually and fulfil their needs in the parched places and make their bones strong. They will be like a watered garden and spring of water whose waters never fail. A watered, fruitful garden may be a figure of national prosperity.³² It can indicate the people's

Adam in his own image and likeness), but, as in the case of the Pharaoh of Ezekiel 31, from the failure to become *really* like God by means of an inward, organic, transformative appropriation of godliness via holding onto God's words, opting, instead, to try to attain this status via an act that severs any organic link between what one does and what one is and thus to deny the ethically reflexive nature of human action (Prov 1:29–33; 12:14; Is 3:10). By means of this process, he would not have become less human, just as soil does not become any less material by entering into the life of a seed that opens within it. But he would have become transhumanised—become more than he was—just as soil becomes more than it was, when it is transformed into a plant." (Glazov 2006, 28).

32 Also Num 24:6; Jer 29:5; Am 9:14. The primordial garden, the garden of Eden is known also as the garden of the Lord, a symbol of land with flourishing vegetation (Gen 2–3; 13:10; Is 51:3; Ezek 36:35; Joel 2:3). In the Old Testament, water is used in many metaphors. The Lord

transformation and renewal. The members of the community are recognised as its repairers and restorers as well. First, all members of the community need to remove the yoke of exploitation among them with communal respect and acceptance in order to become blessed members like a watered garden ready to rebuild devastated ruins. Each individual needs to be respected and noticed by public socio-economic justice and compassion.

2.1.5 Isaiah 58:13–14

V. 13 can be interpreted as a central verse in this chapter because of its crucial point of a necessary obedience, which shows the essential identity of the faithful community. Keeping the Sabbath after the exile has become a confirming standard of orthodoxy (Is 56:2, 4, 6). Hallowing the Sabbath and keeping the Lord's rules are the most obvious signs of a faithful society that delights in a true worship. Sabbath as a holy day is the public sign of a faithful society.³³

However, the addressed people here are those who exploit neighbours with their abusive and aggressive behaviour also on the Sabbath day. Oppressors violate and disregard the Sabbath day because they oppress and exploit their workers (vv. 3, 6, 9b). Vv. 3 and 13 speak about a day of fasting and holy day. V. 3 speaks about a fast day when some people exploit and oppress all their workers whereas in v. 13 the accent is on the holy Sabbath day and people who abuse others in order to serve their own interests and pursue their own affairs. Vv. 3 and 13 describe selfishness and greed, which destroy the vitality of community. Observing the Sabbath day does not mean here just a day of rest (as, e.g. in Exod 23:12). The Sabbath day in Is 58 must be an honourable day.

Keeping the Sabbath day needs to include actions in order to overcome socio-economic problems in society, to stop those who are doing wrong and help those who are the victims (Hanson 1995, 843–845). It is important to protest against the wrong motives in worship and against the violation of the

himself is described as the source of living water (Jer 2:13). The prophet Isaiah says that all who drink of him are like a watered garden and like a spring of water, whose waters never fail (Is 55:1–2; 58:11). When Israel came back to their land in a new exodus, the Lord will refresh his people by fruitful places and they will become like a watered garden (Is 35:6–7; 41:17–20; 43:20).

- 33 The Sabbath day is the only day sanctified by the Lord and it is the climax of creation. The seventh day, the day of rest is an important day in the Lord's creation. In the Sabbath day the Lord shows his autonomy over our time. Furthermore, the Sabbath day is a sign of the covenant (Exod 20:12, 20; 31:13, 14, 17; Num 15:32–36; Jer 17:19–27). The Israelites will show their loyalty to the covenant by keeping the Sabbath day. In return, the Lord will be present among them.

Sabbath day. Sabbath day needs to be a public sign of identity of a faithful person who allows all others to enjoy and rest in the Sabbath day as well. That day needs to be a holy day of the Lord. Sabbath observance becomes here an important condition for the admission into the community of the faithful. Then, that new, alternative community will be the Lord's renovated, healed, prosperous, fruitful community.

The aspects of just socio-economic relations, stable community and access to the Lord are connected and dependent on each other. The message of Is 58 clearly connects the proper keeping of the Sabbath day and the practice of socio-economic justice. Socio-economic justice and keeping the Sabbath day are the main needs for achieving and safeguarding fair relationships between the Lord and the people.³⁴

The Lord's period of salvation has been delayed because of the sinfulness of the people, i.e. their socio-economic injustice and the desecration of the Sabbath day. The era of the Lord's salvation will come to those who will listen, repent and change their violated and sinful way of living (Smith 1995, 113, 127). The beginning of v. 14 'then you shall take delight in the Lord' means a consequence of properly observing the Sabbath day. They will find an honest pleasure in the Lord.

In this context, the Sabbath day represents the sign of penitent people who need to accept the Lord and his ordinances. Observance of the Sabbath needs to be closely connected with the true deeds of justice and righteousness. The people who keep the Sabbath day as a holy, separated day from the other days of the week and envision and actualise social justice are separated from all those who do injustice, violate the Sabbath day, ignore the Lord and his holiness. Westermann correctly underlines that partaking in salvation depends on observing the Sabbath, knowing justice and acting justly (Westermann 1969, 316, 341–342).

The Sabbath day is mentioned in vv. 13–14 while in Lev 25 the Jubilee year and Sabbatical year are described as Sabbath years. The restoration and renewal of the people is the theme of Is 58:14 and the Jubilee legislation in Lev 25. The promise of the restoration and renovation of the inheritance and the people in Is 58:14 can be compared with the idea of restoration of property and family in the year of Jubilee described in Lev 25. It is obvious that Is 58 uses the idea of the Jubilee and reformulates it as a proposal for all those who want

34 It may be that the speaker here was influenced by Ezek 20:1–26 and Neh 13:15–18. The violation of the Sabbath day was a main reason for the people's downfall and a broken relationship between the Lord and the people.

to be free from the oppression and exploitation (Baker 1998, 52–53). Thus, 'if' exploiters and oppressors stop with their cycle of exploitation because of their self-indulgence and start to be aware of the needs of the community 'then' a new, viable community will be able to delight in the Lord (v. 14). Greed and exploitation will be replaced by delight in the Lord of that new alternative society.

In v. 14 the word *בִּמְהָ*³⁵ (height or high place) presents a promise given to the Lord's people. That promise will bring a figurative exaltation of an individual and community. As they will 'delight' in observing the Lord's Sabbath, so the Lord will give them 'delight' in himself (e.g. Gen 15:1; Job 22:21–26). In that delight, their exaltation closer to the Lord will bring a new vision of reality from above. It is a new conceptual perspective that transforms the individual's self-understanding and his role in community. Consequently, that transformed person participates in the reshaping of worshipping community.

Transformed community will be ready to accept the heritage of their ancestor Jacob. The name of Jacob is also mentioned in v. 1 saying that the audience of chapter 58 is the house of Jacob, the Lord's people. In v. 1 the house of Jacob needs to hear publicly about their rebellion and sins. However, if they stop neglecting the Lord's ordinances and start to perform righteousness and merciful deeds in society then they will be fed with the heritage of their ancestor Jacob, i.e. they shall possess the land promised to Jacob as an inheritance.³⁶ The heritage of their ancestor Jacob can represent social, moral and spiritual inheritance, i.e. represents life itself. The Lord will feed his people with the heritage of their ancestor Jacob, which means the Lord will bless their land with the abundant crops and harvest important for their life.

35 The phrase in v. 14 'I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth' (cf. Deut 32:13) sounds very poetical. The speaker uses a metaphorical expression 'heights of the earth'. In the pagan cultures, cultic areas were usually a place on natural high places (1 Sam 9:13 ff.; 10:5; 1 Kgs 11:7; 2 Kgs 17:9, 29; 23:5, 8). The *bāmā* was a place where the cultic materials were kept and the cultic meals were consumed (1 Kgs 12:31; 13:32; 2 Kgs 17:29; 23:19). Also, that was one of the high local places where Israel had worshipped until the reform of Josiah located the worship in Jerusalem. However, the prophet Isaiah in the context of Is 58 does not speak about cultic high places (Harris, Waltke and Archer 2006, 253, *בִּמְהָ*).

36 The Hebrew word *נַחֲלָה* is used in v. 14. It can mean inheritance, heritage, or possession. Usually, the notion of heritage was meant as a permanent succession (e.g. 1 Sam 26:19), i.e. inheritance received by virtue of ancient right. The earth belongs to the Lord (Ps 47:4 (heb 5)) and he gives his land to his people (cf. Is 49:8). Inherited land needs to be recognised still as the Lord's land. The Lord is the main owner of the earth and his chosen people, thus his people should not own or possess one another as property (Lev 25:47 ff.; Is 14:2; Zeph 2:9) (Harris, Waltke and Archer 2006, 1342.0, 1342a *נַחֲלָה*, *נַחֲלָה*).

The chapter ends with the phrase ‘for the mouth of the Lord has spoken’, which is a formula often used when an important promise is made. In this case, the Lord’s promise shall be considered as a true and secure promise ready for fulfilment.

2.2 *Conclusion on Isaiah 58*

This chapter brings a concrete message relating to an extremely conflicted community. It speaks about the necessity for a sincere religious and ethically demanding practice of the people in order to become an authentic faithful society. The main aspect of that message refers to the proper keeping of the Sabbath day and to the socio-economic obligations that the Israelites need to have toward one another in society.

Exegesis of Is 58 examines the meaning of socio-economic justice vs. rebellion or transgression against the Lord. This chapter reveals that despite the fact that the people are sinful and rebellious, they delightfully worship the Lord in a way as if they were the people who kept his commandments and practiced righteousness. They used to fast but the main reason for their religious practice is to get a personal advantage to the detriment of others. They delight to worship the Lord and practice fasting in the same way as they enjoy exploitation and oppression of their labourers and neighbours.

A true fast needs to be a day acceptable to the Lord (also in Is 61:1–3; Lk 4:16–21). An acceptable day is the Jubilee when the Lord’s justice and compassion are restored. Furthermore, that Jubilee day is a time of healing, release from debt slavery, return back to one’s family property. The image of ‘yoke’ shows that socio-economic misconduct treats people like animals. People are under the ‘yoke’ because of financial debts and they need to be free from that bondage. Breaking every kind of yoke and letting the oppressed go free in society will bring socio-economic freedom and establish righteous community. This is clear evidence similar to the legislation of the Jubilee year. The calling for a possible transformation of individuals and society starts with the sound of a voice like a trumpet, which is closely connected with the beginning of the Jubilee year and its sound of *jobel* (Lev 25:9–10).

The addressed people are blamed for the transgressions and sins against the Lord for neglecting and violating his ordinances, which are recognised by their exploitation of neighbours and violation of the Sabbath day. Their transgressions and sins are particularly dangerous since they produce distorted relationships between them and the Lord and within members of society.

In order to receive forgiveness and liberation from their transgressions and sins and to become transformed individuals and an authentic faithful community this chapter brings a conditional offer that can be recognised in the

structures of 'if-then' in vv. 6–9a, 9b–12 and 13–14. *If* the people fulfil all conditions *then* they will be renewed and transformed. If the people practice a proper socio-economic relationship, helping the needy, doing justice and righteousness among themselves and keeping a true fast and the Sabbath day, the Lord will respond by the coming revelation of light, healing, righteousness and glory. Therefore, if the people properly respond to the Lord's message concerning their sins, which are their socio-economic injustice and violation of the Sabbath day, their worship will be recognised and accepted by the Lord.

The people need to take care of the needy and the poor so that the promises of salvation can be fulfilled. The images of salvation are light and healing (e.g. 60:1; 62:2). With the coming of light and healing will also come the Lord's guard of righteousness and his glory. Furthermore, keeping the Sabbath day is closely connected with the promise of salvation. Only when the people observe the Sabbath day and do social justice, they will experience a new time of salvation.

The people will receive a new future if they keep the Lord's commandments (58:8, 14). The commandments and the promised salvation are interlinked in Is 58:14. Participation in salvation depends on properly observing the Sabbath day, knowing justice and acting justly. The main reason why the people have not yet experienced salvation is because of their violation of the commandments, especially that they did not keep the Sabbath day in a proper way. Their private interests must be abolished and replaced by communal delights and the well-being of all members of the community. The coming salvation is described symbolically as the new devout circumstances of inwardly transformed people. The Lord will give the inheritance of their ancestor Jacob to his transformed people who will keep the socio-economic regulations and actualise social justice in their midst. In this context, the inheritance of their ancestor Jacob reflects the Lord's blessing of their land with the abundant crops and harvest for the people's life and it means the possession of the land promised to Jacob as a heritage.

The Lord's glory as a reward will bring a new exaltation and participation in the divine nature. The Lord will make his people ride upon the heights of the earth, which means exaltation closer to the Lord and a new vision from above. That exaltation generates transformation of the individual's self understanding and his or her role in community. Transformed individuals will be like a watered garden, which is a symbol of their transformation and renewal, ready to repair and restore the ancient ruins of many generations as well. Accordingly, transformed individuals will be prepared to participate in a reshaping of their worshipping community.

3 The Year of the Lord's Favour: Isaiah 61

1 רוח אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה עָלַי יָעֹן מִשַּׁח יְהוָה אֵתִי לְבָשָׁר עֲנִוִים שְׁלַחֲנִי לְחַבֵּשׁ לְנִשְׁבְּרֵי־לֵב
 לְקַרְא לְשִׁבּוּיִם דְּרוֹר וְלֹאֲסוּרִים פִּקְח־קוֹחַ:
 2 לְקַרְא שְׁנַת־רִצּוֹן לַיהוָה וַיּוֹם נָקָם לֵאלֹהֵינוּ לְנַחֵם כָּל־אַבְלִים:
 3 לְשׁוּם לְאַבְלֵי צִיּוֹן לְתֵת לָהֶם פָּאֵר שְׁמֵן שִׁשּׁוֹן תַּחַת אֲבָל מַעֲטָה תִּהְיֶה תַּחַת רֹחַ
 כְּהֶה וּקְרָא לָהֶם אֵילֵי הַצֶּדֶק מִטֵּעַ יְהוָה לְהַתְּפָאֵר:
 4 וּבְנוּ חֲרֻבוֹת עוֹלָם שְׁמֹמֹת רֹאשֵׁנִים יְקוֹמְמוּ וְחִדְּשׁוּ עֲרֵי חָרָב שְׁמֹמֹת דּוֹר וָדוֹר:
 5 וְעִמְדוּ זָרִים וְרָעוּ צֹאנֵכֶם וּבְנֵי נֹכַר אֶפְרַיִם וְכַרְמֵיכֶם:
 6 וְאַתֶּם כְּהֵנִי יְהוָה תִּקְרְאוּ מִשְׁרָתִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ יֹאמֶר לָכֵם חֵיל גּוֹיִם תֹּאכְלוּ וּבְכַבּוֹדֶם
 תִּתִּימְרוּ:
 7 תַּחַת בְּשֻׁתְכֶם מִשְׁנֶה וּכְלִמָּה יִרְנוּ חִלָּקֶם לָכֵן בְּאַרְצָם מִשְׁנֶה יִירָשׁוּ שְׁמִיחַת עוֹלָם
 תִּהְיֶה לָהֶם:
 8 כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱהָב מִשְׁפָּט שְׂגָא גֹזַל בְּעוֹלָה וְנָתַתִּי פְעֻלָּתִם בַּיָּמֹת וּבְרִית עוֹלָם אֲכַרֹּת
 לָהֶם:
 9 וְנוֹדַע בְּגוֹיִם זִרְעָם וְצֹאצְאֵיהֶם בְּתוֹךְ הָעַמִּים כָּל־רֹאֲיֵיהֶם יִכִּירוּם כִּי הֵם זֶרַע בְּרֹךְ
 יְהוָה: ס
 10 שׁוֹשׁ אֲשִׁישׁ בִּיהוָה תִּגַּל נִפְשִׁי בֵּאלֹהֵי כִי הִלְבִּישְׁנִי בְּגֵד־יִשְׁע מַעִיל צִדְקָה יַעֲטֵנִי
 כַּחַתָּן יִכְהֶן פָּאֵר וְכִכְלָה תַּעֲדָה כְּלִיָּה:
 11 כִּי כְאֶרֶץ תּוֹצִיא צִמְחָהּ וּבְגִנָּה זְרוּעֶיהָ תִּצְמַח כֵּן אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה יִצְמִיחַ צִדְקָה וְתִהְיֶה
 נִגְדַּד כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם:

- 1 The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;
- 2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;
- 3 to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
- 4 They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.
- 5 Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, foreigners shall till your land and dress your vines;
- 6 but you shall be called priests of the Lord, you shall be named ministers of our God; you shall enjoy the wealth of the nations, and in their riches you shall glory.

- 7 Because their shame was double, and dishonour was proclaimed as their lot, therefore they shall possess a double portion; everlasting joy shall be theirs.
- 8 For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
- 9 Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.
- 10 I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
- 11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

3.1 *The Structure of Isaiah 61*

According to the literary structure, we have found the main parts of chapter 61:³⁷

- I. Vv. 1–3a
- II. Vv. 3b–7
- III. Vv. 8–9
- IV. Vv. 10–11

3.1.1 *Isaiah 61:1–3a*

The beginning of chapter 61 speaks about a person who is anointed with the Spirit of the Lord. The Hebrew verb used for anointing is *מָשַׁח*.³⁸ The ‘anointed

37 For some scholars this chapter is not a literary unit. See e.g. Morgenstern (1970, 109–121).

38 This word with its derivatives can be found in the Scriptures about 140 times. E.g. in Is 21:5 this verb refers to rubbing a shield with oil, putting oil on the body (Am 6:6) or painting a house (Jer 22:14). This verb is also used in connection with some religious rituals. In Exod 40:9–11, the word is used for a ceremonial usage of oil for the tabernacle, altar or laver. The word *מָשַׁח* is more often used for the ceremonial services for leaders, such as the pouring of oil upon the head of a person, i.e. anointing a person to be king (e.g. Solomon in 1 Kgs 1:34, 39); a priest (e.g. Aaron and his sons in Exod 28:41); a prophet (e.g. Elisha in 1 Kgs 19:16) or an unnamed prophet (Is 61:1). The Lord is the main agent of anointing because he himself anoints the persons for his ministry (e.g. 1 Sam 10:1; 2 Sam 12:7). With anointing comes the power of the Spirit of the Lord upon a person or an object (e.g. 1 Sam 10:6 ff.; 16:13 ff.).

one' in 61:1 does not mean only a person anointed with oil but rather a chosen person for the Lord's specific ministry.³⁹

These verses 1–3 speak about the twofold mission of the anointed one, which is announcement (vv. 1b–2a) and comfort (vv. 2b–3a). He announces himself as the one who has received the Spirit in order to fulfil the Lord's specific mission.⁴⁰ This ministry includes: to bring news to the poor, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom to the captives, to bring out the prisoners from dark bondage, to comfort all who mourn, to bring the oil of gladness and garment of praise, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour and the day of his vengeance. With this kind of ministry will come a big transformation upon society and on those to whom he has been sent (Westermann 1969, 365–366).

The similar description of the Spirit of the Lord רֹחַ אֱלֹהִים⁴¹ (61:1) upon a person may be found, for example, in Is 11:2 and 42:1 as well.⁴² Brueggemann

39 See Westermann (1969, 366); Whybray (1975, 258); Zimmerli (1978, 100). As noun or adjective the word קָשִׁיחַ 'anointed one' occurs about forty times in the Old Testament. E.g. this word refers to an office of the high priest (e.g. Lev 4:3) and the king's office (e.g. 1 Sam 2:10; 2 Sam 22:51; Ps 2:2; 18:50, 51). This title describes the relationship between the Lord and the anointed one. Regarding that relationship, it is important to underline that the concept of the Spirit in the Old Testament is not separated from the Lord as an independent person.

40 Some scholars have found similarities between chapter 61 and D1. For example, the expression 'the Lord God' (Is 61:1, 11) is mentioned several times in D1 as well (e.g. 40:10; 48:16; 49:22; 50:4, 5, 7, 9; 52:4). Regarding the servants of the Lord, this expression is mentioned in 56:6–8; 65:13, 15. See also Beuken (1989).

41 This term can be used for spirit, wind, breath (e.g. Gen 6:17; 8:1; 41:8; Exod 10:13; 15:8; Num 16:22; Job 4:9; 5:13; 6:26; 15:30; Ps 18:16 (heb 17); 104:30; Is 30:28; Jer 49:36; Ezek 37:9); the spirit of jealousy (e.g. Num 5:14, 30); the spirit of depression (e.g. 1 Sam 16:14–16); the fainting spirit (e.g. Is 61:3); the spirit of strength (e.g. Judg 14:6, 19; 15:14), etc. In the prophetic tradition, the empowered prophets were able to speak a prophetic message to their audience. Anointing is a ceremony correlated with the ministries of priests, kings and prophets. In Is 61:1 the special anointing refers to the prophet and the Lord's assignment (Blenkinsopp 2003, 222–223). All these verses do not have the same, concrete figure in their specific historical situations. 11:1–2 speaks about arriving of a king from the stem of Jesse.

42 E.g. The Lord's spirit (רֹחַ) was hovering over the surface of the waters (Gen 1:2) and the waters of the Exodus were divided by a strong wind (רֹחַ) (Exod 14:21). Only in 1 Kgs 22 the term 'spirits' should be seen as a different category, which is more connected with the idea of angels not with the Lord himself (Ma 1999, 19). Watts interprets that 'the spirit of my lord the Lord' refers to the real or ideal king (Watts 2005a, 872). This king is different from all Davidic leaders of the past who failed in their rule of leadership (Brueggemann 1998, 100). 42:1 speaks about a servant while 61:1 speaks about an anointed person in a

says that "the 'spirit of the Lord' is a force that enlivens, gives power, energy, and courage, so that its bearer is recognised as one designated, who has the capacity to do what the world believers is impossible." (Brueggemann 1998, 99). This specific person in 61:1 has a ministry of comfort and restoration of the Lord's people and the result of his empowerment with the Lord's spirit will bring a change in the society throughout his ministry of proclamation and consolation (Blenkinsopp 2003, 223). In this case, the Lord gives his anointing primarily because of the proclamation of good news, the year of his favour and the coming salvation.

This person is described as an anointed one with royal and prophetic characteristics who will come in the future and bring good news as well, i.e. complete the fulfilment of the year of the Lord's favour (Is 61:1–2) (Webb 1996, 234). The complete salvation of the Lord's people will be accomplished in the future. The specificity of that kind of anointing is his activities within the history of Israel and in the coming eschatological time. His significant role can be perceived in the old traditions, partially experienced in the Isaianic time and expected in the eschatological time. The person in Is 61 has been sent to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour and bring healing, liberty, comfort, joy, place of belonging that are very similar, almost identical with Jesus' public ministry. Thus, the word *מָשִׁיחַ* may be related to Jesus Christ who is the coming deliverer.⁴³

'To bind up the broken hearted' represents an unusual figure of speech. However, it looks very similar to the language of Is 58:6. The broken hearted and the captives represent the kind of people who were put in prison for debts. The message of Is 61 relates to the message of release and freedom for the people who were poor, i.e. debt slaves (Lev 25:10; Jer 34:8ff.; Ezek 46:17). The captives, the prisoners, the poor and the broken-hearted are people who suffered because of financial crises and socio-economic problems. V. 8 says that the Lord hates robbery and iniquity, which is related with v. 1. The people mentioned in v. 1 are people who suffered because of robbery and iniquity in their society. The message of the proclamation of the year of the Lord's favour is the message of the Lord's blessings, which brings a deep change in human life (Westermann 1969, 366–367). Also, 'to proclaim' and 'to comfort' in Is 61:1–2 are

very general sense. Ma has found two traditions about the endowment of the Lord's spirit. One tradition is connected with the royal bestowal and the second one with the prophetic endowment of the Lord's spirit (e.g. Num 24:2; 1 Sam 16:13; 2 Sam 23:1–7). See also Ma (1999).

43 The quotation of Ps 2:2 in the New Testament refers to Jesus Christ and his universal rule a (e.g. Acts 13:32 ff.; Heb 1:5; 5:5) (Ellison 1953, 1–23). About this issue, concretely about the connection between the anointed person, the Messiah and Jesus Christ in Is 61; Lk 4:16–18 and 11QMelchizedek in the Qumran writings we are going to discuss in the next chapter.

similar to Is 40:1–2 and ‘to bring good news’ with Is 40:9. We may say that the mission and the person of a speaker like a prophet and a servant described in DI are closely connected with TI’s description of the same person and his ministry. That mission needs to have a concrete influence on socio-economic relations among members of a community and restore them to full function of wellbeing and safety.

The verbs mentioned in Is 61:1b–3 ‘to bring, to bind up, to proclaim, to release, to comfort, to provide, to give’, are used in order to proclaim the year of Jubilee. The Jubilee legislation takes into consideration restoration of the lost properties and people’s lives. That restoration makes a functional restored community as well. The good Jubilee news refers to the renovation and restoration of life out of slavery, hopelessness and impoverishment. Is 61:1–3 refers to the concrete situation of the community and give a radical response to that community.

The terse series of “insteads” is a radical transformation of communal attitude and condition, made possible by the proclamation and enactment of Jubilee: “garland ... ashes; gladness ... mourning; praise ... faint spirit.” The three are parallel moves from negating grief and despair to jubilant celebration. In context, the transformation is from powerless indebtedness to the restoration of dignity and viability.

BRUEGGEMANN 1998, 215

All this series of transformative verbs refer to the announcement of the year of the Lord’s favour as well. The proclamation of Jubilee is good news of the renewed life released from poverty, hopelessness and despair. The year of the Lord’s favour brings a big change in the life of his people. All those who will be restored will get liveliness, revelation and determination. They will be like oaks, full of strength, stability and permanence. In the year of Jubilee, debt-slaves need to be released from their debts and to return to their families and lost properties. Original owners shall be allowed to get again possession of their own property and socio-economic life needs to be reorganised according to the Lord’s rules. Thus, with that radical transformation of personal lives, the new community will be able to rebuild its ruined cities (Brueggemann 1998, 215).

The word דָּוָר and its derivation mean flowing, free run (e.g. Exod 30:23) and liberty (e.g. Lev 25:10; Is 61:1; Jer 34:8, 15, 17; Ezek 46:17) (Brown, Driver and Briggs 1999, 204). Similar to the Akkadian word *anduraru*, which means ‘freedom, liberty’, the Hebrew word דָּוָר refers to the release of Hebrew slaves and property in the year of the Lord’s favour. The phrase ‘to send the oppressed

free' in Is 58:6 is similar to the message of Is 61:1–2. Both of these verses reflect the ideas of Lev 25 concerning the year of Jubilee (Hanks 1983, 99). Is 58:6 and 61:1–2 are formulated in the similar language of the year of Jubilee (Lev 25:10). Biblical interpreters in general agree that this reference to freedom in Is 61:1 refers to the practice of the year of Jubilee in Lev 25, which is the Torah vision of Jubilee. The book of Isaiah uses this term *ḥēṣer* only once in Is 61:1 where this word refers to announcing good news to the troubled, poor, imprisoned, captives.⁴⁴

The Jubilee legislation brings a new hope especially to the poor and disadvantaged. It is most likely that the Hebrew word *ḥēṣer*⁴⁵ here denotes their socio-economic situation.⁴⁶ In the time of great crisis, most of the people usually lose

44 Jer 34:8 speaks about the release of the slaves during the reign of Zedekiah during the time of Babylonian siege in the sixth century B.C.E. Even though Zedekiah proclaimed release to the slaves after the Babylonian siege was over, the Israelites took back their slaves (Jer 34:11). Because of that kind of behaviour, the people will be punished with sword, pestilence and famine (Jer 34:15–17). Ezek 46:17 also uses the word *ḥēṣer* that refers to the future prince who will give a property to his servants until the year of freedom.

45 This word and its derivations mean poor, low, humble, meek, gentle, afflicted, oppressed, miserable, to force, to force submission, to punish, to inflict pain, to find oneself in a humble position, to be destitute. The verb often occurs in the Piel form in the Old Testament. The word may refer what a person does to his or her enemies (e.g. Gen 16:5) or what the godless does to the unprotected and powerless (e.g. Exod 22:22 (heb 21)). Also, the same word may describe what Egyptians have done to the people in Egypt (e.g. Exod 1:11–12) or what the Lord has done to his enemies (e.g. Deut 26:6). Furthermore, this word is used in order to describe inner pain followed by fasting and contrition (e.g. Gen 16:9; Lev 16:29, 31; Ezra 8:21; Ps 119:107; Is 53:7; 58:10; Dan 10:12). Moses is described as a humble man who depends on the Lord (Num 12:3). Humble persons wait, seek, keep the Lord's commandments and experience the Lord to be their personal deliverer (Ps 10:17; 37:11; 69:32 (33); 76:9 (heb 10); Prov 3:34; Zeph 2:3). The main purpose of affliction, the wilderness wandering and the exile were to humble the Israelites (e.g. Deut 8:20; Ps 102:23 (heb 24); Is 64:12 (heb 11); Zech 10:2). Thus, this word usually indicates some kind of distress, disability or affliction. Affliction may be physical e.g. Ps 88:15 (heb 16); Is 51:21; physiological or spiritual (Ps 22:24 (heb 25); 25:16; 34:6 (heb 7); 68:10 (heb 11); 69:29 (heb 30)). But the Lord is taking care for the afflicted (e.g. Ps 9:18 (heb 19); 34:6 (heb 7); 35:10; 68:10 (heb 11); 72:2,4; 74:19; Is 49:13) (Harris, Waltke and Archer 2006, 1652 *ḥēṣer*).

46 The class of *ḥēṣerim* may also include widows, orphans and strangers (e.g. Is 3:14; 10:2; Am 2:7). The socio-political situation was controlled by the state in the eighth century B.C.E. Even though the legislation did not permit charging interest to a debtor and daily salaries needed to be paid before sunset (Exod 22:25; Deut 24:14–15), the state decided to put heavy taxation especially on a peasant class. Consequently, peasants lost their household and property because of insolvency and the formation of latifundia for the benefit of a few

their land and some other main resources for living. Socio-economic affliction was one of the main reasons for some people to become impoverished, humiliated and poor.⁴⁷ The poor are associated here with the broken hearted as well. The anointed one is going to bring good news to these kinds of people.⁴⁸

The word שָׁבִי may be found in the phrase 'leading captive'⁴⁹ or can mean 'captivity, prisoner, captive'. Usually the Lord is presented as the one who leads captives. When people are taken away by enemies or military occupation, they immediately lose their freedom and place of belonging.⁵⁰ The anointed one upon whom is the Spirit of the Lord comes in order to proclaim liberty to all those who are captives (Is 61:1). Regarding the captives, TI speaks about imprisonment because of financial slavery. Persons with debts were forced to be sold into slavery by their economically better situated authorities. The Hebrew term דָּרוֹר means here also freedom for all debt slaves who are imprisoned because of a financial and economical crisis. This kind of freedom brings relief from the bonds of oppression (Beuken 1989, 419–420).

Westermann interprets the 'captives' as the people who were put in prison because of debts (e.g. Is 58:6). The liberation of the captives does not mean only freedom from exile but freedom from the financial debt crisis as well. Salvation comes for those who are suffering because of their socio-economic exploitation and crisis. Westermann correctly sees here a close connection with the announcement of freedom from the slavery for all those who are slaves because of their financial debts (Lev 25:10; Jer 34:8 ff.; Ezek 46:17) (Westermann 1969, 366–367). Accordingly, the proclamation of freedom means here a prophetic program for the new and just socio-economic order.

The loss of property and the social disability were the triggers for the prophet to proclaim liberty to all those who were in debt and poverty. "To proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" needs to be interpreted in relation with the institution of release of slaves (Lev 25:10) because, as it was earlier said, the Hebrew word

rich people. The result of that kind of social-economy situation was the Babylonian exile and occupation of the land. Because of the Babylonian and Persian imperial powers, the Israelites were exploited and very often called 'the poor of the Lord'. In the liturgical hymns the context of the poor and needy is a religious one. The poor are described as the Lord's just and righteous people (Ps 72:2, 4, 12; 109:16, 22), the seekers of the Lord (Ps 22:26 (27 heb.); 69:33).

47 E.g. Is 3:14; Ezek 18:17.

48 Their foes are godless, arrogant, selfish people (Ps 10:2, 9; 35:10; 147:6) (Blenkinsopp 2003, 224).

49 E.g. Jud 5:12; Ps 68:18 (heb 19).

50 E.g. Num 21:1; Am 4:10.

for the proclamation of freedom דָּרֹר in Is 61:1 is the same word used in Lev 25:10 regarding the Jubilee year.

Cyrus king of Persia is described as a righteous man because he was called to deliver the Lord's people.⁵¹ Cyrus issued the decree that the Jews may return home from Babylon. After fifty years of exile in Babylon, the first group arrived shortly after the proclamation of Cyrus' verdict in Jerusalem around 538–536 B.C.E. (Knight 1985, xii). It is possible that the Jubilee here was announced 537 B.C.E. i.e. fifty years after the fall of Jerusalem 587 B.C.E. The exiled people had been released from their bondage and returned to their property because of the permission issued by Cyrus' decree (Knight 1985, 54). Cyrus' edict has marked something as the Jubilee legislation. This decree permitted the Jews to return to the land in Jerusalem and Judah.⁵² The proclamation of liberty may be an action performed in the year of Jubilee (cf. Lev 25) when the exiled slaves become free people. The anointed one brings good news, which refers to the year of Jubilee when every fifty years comes a proclamation of freedom from debts, slavery and poverty.⁵³

51 E.g. Is 42:6; 45:13.

52 Their city was laid in ruins and they began rebuilding the temple and working on building their homes. However, this work of rebuilding the temple was stopped because of the false accusation (2 Chr 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–4; 4:6–13; 5:13). The Bible gives us several different decrees regarding rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple. Here is the brief summary of the biblical references concerning the issue:

1. Cyrus' decree (537(8) B.C.E.) permitted the people to return and rebuild the temple. Rebuilding of the temple was discontinued because of the false accusations (1 Chron 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–4; 4:6–13; 5:13).
2. Darius' decree (520 E.C.E.) allowed the Jews to complete the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 6:6–12).
3. Artaxerxes' decree in his 7th year of rule (457 B.C.E.) permitted Ezra to teach the nation the law of the Lord (Ezra 7:11–28).
4. Artaxerxes' letter of permission in his 20th year of rule (445 B.C.E.) given to Nehemiah concerning rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem (Neh 1; 2:1–8).

As we can see, one part of the commandment for the restoration of Jerusalem was issued by Cyrus, and then Darius renewed and added this decree. After that, Artaxerxes finished this work by authorising Ezra and Nehemiah to complete the restoration of Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple.

53 E.g. Zimmerli interprets Is 61 as an early post-exilic product and understands it through the notion of the expectation of the Jubilee year in Lev 25 with the idea of a 'messianic' redeemer. For him, Is 61 is a secondary reusing of the Jubilee traditions, since the socio-economic idea of forgiveness of monetary debt and return to property is generalised to 'comfort for mourners' and 'freedom for captives'. This can be symbolical for the disheartened exiles. Furthermore, Zimmerli infers that Ezekiel's notice of the date of his

The phrase 'proclaim freedom' in v. 2 may also be associated with the proclamation of the seventh year release for all those who were sold into debt slavery. In the seventh year the debt-slaves were set free from their debts (Exod 21:2; Deut 5:1–11; Jer 34:8–22). The year of the Lord's favour and the seventh year release may indicate here the same institution (Blenkinsopp 2003, 224–225). Zimmerli underlines that the 'year' in the chapter 61 may indicate the Sabbath year, Jubilee year or New Year and in all these events freedom was announced to the captives, the needy and the poor (Zimmerli 1970, 321–332).

The rules regarding the 'year' have mostly descriptive and prophetic significance, such as 'year of favour' (Is 61:2), 'year of release' (Lev 25:10–11; Ezek 46:17), 'year of Jubilee' (Lev 25:13), 'year of remission' (Deut 15:1; 31:10), 'year of vengeance' (Is 63:4). The Hebrew word שָׁנָה (year) in v. 2 can be used metaphorically. 'Year' can represent an intervening time of opportunity and can be a metaphor for the liberty, which comes from the Lord to his chosen people as well.

The prophet Trito-Isaiah uses similar words regarding the year of the Lord's favour from Lev 25:11, 13 in order to speak about release and freedom for the exploited and slaves (Bruce 1962, sec. 2–3). The text of Is 61 gives an explanation of those who will be healed, released, rehabilitated in the year of the Lord's favour but it does not say who will experience the Lord's revenge in the day of vengeance. An unequal treatment between the afflicted poor-men and the greedy rich-men is described by the nouns 'favour' and 'vengeance'.⁵⁴

vision of restoration (Ezek 40:1) places him at the Day of Atonement halfway through a Jubilee cycle. For him, specifically Ezek 46:17 infers that Ezekiel knew Lev 25 or an earlier stage of the Jubilee law (Zimmerli 1970, 321–332).

- 54 The word נָקָם with its derivatives is used about seventy times in the Old Testament. Before the monarchy in Israel the original meaning of the word 'revenge' was connected with the restoration of wholeness. The blood revenge in the Old Testament was the legislation in the tribal Israelite community in order to establish a just society. Usually, blood vengeance is performed by the closest kin of a murder victim. The Old Testament speaks about the refugee cities that provide a safety zone for some people who killed somebody unintentionally. The cities are a place of safety from the avenger, so that the manslayer could not be killed until he stands trial (e.g. Num 35:9–28). Blood revenge still exists in the Near East societies (Westermann 1969, 367). Divine vengeance or revenge in the Old Testament must be interpreted in correlation with the Lord's justice, righteousness and holiness and how they affect a sinner. The holy and righteous Lord cannot tolerate sin and rebellion in his presence. The Lord's vengeance is very tightly connected with his love and mercy. The Lord of anger is the same Lord of mercy who shows his mercy and redemption from sins to his chosen people. The main focus of the Old Testament is on the objects of his compassion and mercy not on his vengeance. Divine revenge should be

Consequently, a vision of Jubilee is appallingly destructive to those who benefit and profit from taking advantage from the poor and needy.

The people who mourn (61:2) are those who are troubled by their situation. This kind of situation forces an acceptance of the oppression of cruel rich authorities. However, the concept of freedom, which refers to all who are troubled, is connected with the year of the Lord's favour and the day of his vengeance as well. The freedom will happen in a concrete, certain time, such as during the Jubilee year (Lev 25:10) or during the Sabbatical year (Exod 21:2; Deut 15:1–18; Jer 34:14; Ezek 46:17). That year means a special time for all those who mourn because they will be liberated from oppression and poverty. The Lord himself will take action in his chosen special time. The word pairs 'year–day' and 'favour–vengeance' reflect the Lord's time and action. The term 'favour' refers to all those to whom the prophet has been sent. Another term 'vengeance' is connected with the Lord's action and the 'day of vengeance' can relate to the 'day of the Lord' but Is 61 does not mention a specific foe⁵⁵ (Westermann 1969, 367).

However, vengeance might be taken on those who keep some people imprisoned like miserable debt slaves and it is possible to conclude that the revenge here may present an authoritative action of realisation of the proclaimed liberation in a socio-economic community (Beuken 1989, 420–421). The proclaimed liberty will bring good news, comfort, freedom, gladness and praise to the cap-

seen as necessary part of the Lord's history of redemption in relation to his chosen people. The Old Testament presents the Lord as the main agent of vengeance (e.g. Deut 32:35, 41). First of all, the Lord avenges his people against the cruel enemies (e.g. Ps 94). Regarding the covenantal relationship between the Lord and his people, the Lord will punish all those who will break that covenant (e.g. Lev 26:24–25). On the one hand there are some cases when the Lord gives permission to his people to do vengeance in his name (e.g. Num 31) but on the other hand the Lord forbids his people to take any kind of vengeance in their own power and strength (e.g. Lev 19:18; Deut 32:35). It can mean revenge of a human (e.g. Jud 16:28) but more often refers to divine recompense, requital, vengeance (e.g. Ps 58:11; Is 47:3; Ezek 24:8; Mic 5:14) (Harris, Waltke and Archer 2006, 1413a בָּרָא). Furthermore, some prophetic sayings speak about the eschaton and prophetic final day when the Lord's vengeance will be done (e.g. Is 63:1–6). Also, the New Testament speaks about the Lord's vengeance only in relation to the future world (e.g. Heb 10:28–31; Rev 19:15).

55 Watts has found an explanation for that. For him Is 34:8 represents vengeance against Zion because the enemies could be found within Zion (Is 1:24). The Lord's enemies can be found within or outside the Israelites. Vengeance against the Lord's enemies and acceptance of the Lord's servants are important in order to re-establish renewed relationship between the Lord and his people especially after the Babylonian exile (Watts 2005a, 873).

tives, the poor, the broken hearted and the mourners.⁵⁶ It is correct to interpret the terms 'day' and 'year' in Is 61 eschatologically⁵⁷ as a new era because the 'year of favour' and the 'day of vengeance' do not mean a particular date and event but a new era. The Lord will fulfil completely his promise of blessing and his time of grace will come in his coming time (Westermann 1969, 367).

Baker correctly concludes that Is 61 presents the Jubilee year eschatologically. V. 1 uses the word מָשַׁח, which means anointed and therefore, the year of the Lord's favour in v. 2 may reflect the messianic time. The main task of the speaker is to proclaim liberty to the poor and the oppressed and these kinds of people will be fully released from their affliction in the messianic time (Baker 1998, 52). The year of Jubilee in Is 61:1 gives a simultaneous eschatological messianic meaning to Lev 25:10.

56 The year of the Lord's favour and the day of vengeance may be interpreted positively according to affirmative aspects of T1 (especially chapters 60–62) toward Zion's future. Also some scholars interpret 'vengeance' in a positive way using the words such as 'restoration' or 'restitution'. See e.g. Westermann (1969, 367); Beuken (1989, 421–422). However, the conceptual foundation of the Lord's eschatological day can be seen throughout the concept of a 'day of vengeance', which is a part of tradition and the holy war (Is 2:12–17; Jer 46:2–12; Am 5:18–20; Zeph 1:1–2:4). See e.g. von Rad (1959, 97–108); Ma (1999, 123). Some scholars believe that the 'day of vengeance' is connected with the 'day of the Lord', i.e. the final day of liberation and judgment (Koole 2001, 274). In that day the Lord will set right all that is wrong and distorted in this world (Herbert 1975, 163). Blenkinsopp underlines the importance to notice the biblical references regarding the action against the Lord's foes, which will happen in the day of the Lord, i.e. in the end of time (Lev 26:25; Deut 32:35, 41, 43; Ps 58:11; Prov 6:34; Is 34:8; 35:4; 47:3; 59:17; 63:4) (Blenkinsopp 2003, 225).

57 Regarding the eschatological time, Beuken mentions the possibility that a final redactor decided to replace the term יְשׁוּעָה 'salvation' (49:8) with the term נָקָם 'vengeance' in Is 61:2 because the notion of vengeance reflects the eschatological event, such as a final salvation for the Lord's people. It can be that the terms 'favour' and 'vengeance' symbolise the two main results of the eschatological happening. The Lord as the warrior is very often described in that way in T1 (e.g. 63:15; 64:11). The Lord's main opponents are injustice, discrimination and the hostile people who persist to be his enemies (Beuken 1989, 422–424). Throughout his exegesis of 49:8 and 59:16–17 together with Is 61:2, Beuken makes a conclusion that the final editor is not responsible for changing the term of salvation into 'vengeance' in Is 61:2 but this is the work of the author of T1 himself. "By means of this term 'the prophet' lets it be known that the moment of God's 'favour', which had been promised to the Servant, now begins through his own service, but that the listeners should understand this in the light of God's intention to act with strength, i.e. 'vengeance', against the injustice in Israel, to which no one else stands to arms (59:16)." (Beuken 1989, 424).

3.1.2 Isaiah 61:3B–7

V. 3 speaks about the new joyful time for the people who will receive a new name. With that change, they will build up the ancient ruins, cities and raise up the former devastations (v. 4).⁵⁸ Renewal of people, renovation and rebuilding of places are a result of the Lord's favour. Chapter 58 speaks about the promise of reconstruction and righteousness (58:9–12) that can also be found in this chapter. The renovation will be done by the righteous people (58:7–12) who might be called oaks of righteousness (61:3–4).

The Lord himself will be glorified in Zion.⁵⁹ This kind of glorification is closely connected with the entire proclamation of salvation (Westermann 1969, 359–360). Thus, Zion here does not just mean the physical city of Jerusalem. It means the restoration and renewal of the covenant relationship that also include other people from different nations (Groningen 1990, 661). But first

58 V. 4 is similar with Is 49:8 "Thus says the Lord: In a time of favour I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages." Also, 'a time of favour' and 'a day of salvation' is reformulated in 61:2 with 'the year of favour' and 'the day of vengeance'. Beuken has found that TI summons the promise of the renovation of the cities, which is mentioned also in DI (e.g. 44:26; 49:19; 51:3; 54:3) (Beuken 1989, 425).

59 The word צִיּוֹן is mentioned in verse 3 and can be related to the Arabic word *ṣāna*, which means 'protect, defend'. Zion is the mountain situated between the Kidron and Tyropean valleys and it has been known as a place of fortress and protection. Since the mountain was captured by David from the Jebusites (2 Sam 5:7), it has also been recognised as David's city. Zion as Jerusalem itself is known as the main center of David's dynasty. David brought the Ark of the Covenant inside the tent and then he enunciated Zion as the place of the Lord's presence (2 Sam 6:17; Ps 132:13). It has been predicted as the place of the future coming of the messianic kingdom. That place has been described as the place of the Great King (Ps 48:2 (heb 3); Matt 5:35). Furthermore, whoever has been born in Zion will participate in the Lord's salvation (Ps 87:4–5) regardless of his or her real nationality. All these indicate they are all subjects to the Lord who creates, upholds and encompass all nations. "Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of the Lord (Zion)" (Ps 87:3). This psalm celebrates the city of the Lord, i.e. Zion or Jerusalem as the Lord's specially chosen place for the Lord's authority and his purpose. Singers and dancers rejoice in the Lord on that special place and lean on his carrying love and sovereign presence. They say "all my springs are in you" (Ps 87:7b) (Kenyon 1967, 912.וּיְשׁוּעָתִי בְּיָדֶיךָ). Zion is not distinguished as a holy place in the creation account nor in the whole Pentateuch. Only in Gen 22:2 is it mentioned as the mount Moriah where Abraham needed to sacrifice Isaac. Zion was not created as a holy place separated from the others. Its holiness was gradually established within the Israelites' history (cf. Ps 78:68). It became a very important religious place for the whole world. For instance, for the prophet Ezekiel Zion is the center where the Lord upholds the whole earth (Ezek 38:12).

of all, Zion's comfort will be experienced throughout socio-economic, political and spiritual freedom⁶⁰ (Laato 1998, 135).

The Hebrew noun **פָּאָר** means turban,⁶¹ headdress or garland. In Is 61:3 this word means that the subject of glorifying or beautifying is the Lord and the Lord's people have benefit from it. Israel is called 'the Lord's glory' by the Lord himself (Is 46:13; 62:3; Jer 13:11; 33:9). The word **אָפֵר** appears twenty-one times in the Old Testament and means ashes.⁶² The word **אָפֵר** is a word play on **פָּאָר**. In Is 61:3 ashes symbolise the custom of mourning. Usually the rite of mourning was performed by a penitent who threw the ashes toward heaven so that the ashes could fall down on him or her. Another indication was to use ashes and put it on the head as a sign of humiliation (2 Sam 13:19) or to sit among the ashes (Job 2:8) (De Ward 1972, 1–27).

60 The name Zion can be found in the Old Testament 108 times and for the first time is mentioned in 2 Sam 5:7. Zion has been known as well as the temple area, Jerusalem itself, the Lord's chosen people, the Lord's dwelling place, the city of the Lord in the new epoch, the joy of the earth, the covenant community (e.g. 1 Kgs 8:1; 2 Kgs 19:31; 1 Chr 11:5; 2 Chr 5:2; Ps 9:12; 48:3, 13; 51:20; 69:36; 78:68; 97:8; Is 1:27; 4:5; 8:18; 60:14; 62:1, 11; Ezek 38:12; Am 1:2; Mic 4:7; Zeph 3:16) (Fohrer and Lohse 1979, 292–338). Zion was also ruined during the Babylonian exile but it will be cleansed, renovated and redeemed by the Lord's righteousness and judgment (Is 1:27; 4:4; 33:5). The Lord will rebuild Zion by laying down a cornerstone (Is 28:16) and his glory will be in that place (Is 4:5 ff.). Most prophetic sayings, especially Isaiah, describe Zion as the main place for the Lord's salvation in the future. The people of the Lord will come back to Zion with joy and they will not mourn anymore. Thus, the Lord's people will return from the exile to Zion and will be protected from their enemies as well (e.g. Is 30:19; 33:20; 35:10; 51:11). The restored Zion will be a place for all nations and all other foreign people will be able to worship the Lord in Zion (Is 2:3; Mic 4:2). The nations will be ministers of the glorification of Zion in the new age (e.g. Is 60). The Lord himself will have his dwelling place in Zion in the new age from where He will reign (Is 59:20; Zech 8:3). That dwelling place will be fertile and flourishing as the Garden of Eden (51:3). The Lord's delight will be in Zion from where he will reign (Is 62:1–5) (Fohrer and Lohse 1979, 292–338).

61 The turban was worn by women (Is 3:20), men (Ezek 24:17, 23), the high priests (Exod 39:28; Ezek 44:18), and the bridegroom (Is 61:10). It derives from the verb **פָּאָר**, which may indicate clothing with beauty. The verb may be found thirteen times in the Old Testament, mostly in the book of Isaiah (e.g. in the Piel form in 55:5; 60:7, 9, 13 and in the Hithpael in 10:15; 44:23; 49:3; 60:21; 61:3). In the Piel form the verb can mean to glorify or to beautify (Harris, Waltke and Archer 2006, 1726 **פָּאָר**).

62 Ashes are used metaphorically in order to describe despair (Ps 102:9 (heb 10)); shame (2 Sam 13:19); humility (Gen 18:27; Job 42:6); repentance (Dan 9:3); purification (Num 19:9–10, 17); fasting (Ester 4:1; Job 42:6; Is 58:5; Jonah 3:6).

It is easy to find here a contrast between the past time of mourning and the new time of praise, gladness and joy. The new time brings the transformation of life. The outward transformation of a person's outfit metaphorically describes the new situation and the new time of salvation (Smith 2009, 636). The Hebrew word for praise in Is 61:3 is תְּהַלֵּל.⁶³ In Is 61:11 the speaker summoning the whole world to praise the Lord.

Verse 3 speaks also about the oaks of righteousness.⁶⁴ Is 61:3 refers to those who mourn in Zion and who will be renewed by the Lord and his garland, the oil of gladness and the garment of praise. All those will become like the planting of the Lord and will be called oaks of righteousness. The standard for performing righteous deeds is the Lord's commandments. The righteous man acts in order to protect and care for the safety and prosperity of the community. Is 61:3 infers that his people shall be righteous because the Lord himself is the righteous Lord who loves justice and hates robbery and iniquities. The Israelites were in exile but the Lord acted accordingly to his righteousness and delivered them from exile (e.g. Is 46:12–13).

The text speaks about the devastations that happened in the time of the forefathers,⁶⁵ in the time of Assyrian and Babylonian attacks (Koole 2001, 281). During the time when the Jews were in exile Judah and Jerusalem with its temple were destroyed. All cities of Judah had been ruined in the time when the

63 This word and its derivatives describe also sincere gratitude, human understanding (Prov 12:8), exalting beauty (Gen 12:15; 2 Sam 14:25), renovation of cities (Jer 48:2), but mostly it means praising the Lord. Praising can be performed by speaking, singing and dancing (e.g. Ps 69:30 (heb 31); 149:3; Jer 31:7) (Harris, Waltke and Archer 2006, 500c תְּהַלֵּל).

64 The Hebrew word for oak or mighty tree is לֵאלֹכֶיךָ. Usually this word describes a mighty tree, i.e. not a specific kind of tree (e.g. Is 1:29; 57:5; 61:3) but can be terebinth tree or oak. Terebinth tree is known as 'Pistacia Terebinthus' or 'pistacia palaestina'. It can be mostly found in the Mediterranean region, in warm or dry places. It is seldom seen in clumps or groves, never in forests. Usually, terebinth tree stands isolated on a hillside. Its root penetrates very deeply into the ground and it can grow to be very large, around nine meters and live for over a thousand years. Oil from terebinth tree is known to have been used in healing balms. The word לֵאלֹכֶיךָ is used for the 'oak' of Moreh in Gen 12:6. In Is 1:29–30 the two Hebrew words לֵאלֹכֶיךָ and תְּהַלֵּל are used in order to describe a mighty tree. Thus, these two words seem compatible and can be translated as 'oak', 'terebinth', and also as 'mighty tree'. Terebinths, e.g. the Hebrew word תְּהַלֵּל, even though some translate the word as 'oak', may be found in various situations (e.g. Gen 35:4; Jud 6:11, 19; 2 Sam 18:9, 10, 14; 1 Kgs 13:14; 1 Chron 10:12; Is 1:30; 6:13; Ezek 6:13; Hos 4:14) (Harris, Waltke and Archer 2006, 45g לֵאלֹכֶיךָ, 45h תְּהַלֵּל, 45i תְּהַלֵּל).

65 Some scholars interpret the Hebrew word רִאשִׁימֹן as the forefathers (e.g. Lev 26:45; Deut 19:14).

announcement of salvation came. The prophecy of the rebuilding of ancient ruins in v. 4 may reflect a time that had passed since 586(7) B.C.E. and the destruction of Jerusalem. The prophet was aware of the circumstances that had caused desperation. Thus, when the people were released from the exile and when they returned to their land, the year of the Lord's favour had begun. Comfort, healing, forgiveness were received with their coming back to their own land. Is 61:4 says that those people will build up and repair the ruined cities, the former devastation of many generations. The year of the Lord's favour brings a new hope for renovation and rebuilding the ancient ruins, i.e. the rebuilding and restoration of Jerusalem's ruins as well (vv. 4–5) (Webb 1996, 234–236). V. 5 speaks about strangers who will be farmers and vinedressers like the Israelites. They are included into the communal life in the fellowship of the Lord's people as well (e.g. 56:3, 6 ff.).

Is 61:6 mentions that the whole Israelite nation shall be called priests and ministers of the Lord. They will be mediators between the Lord and other peoples.⁶⁶ It is possible to find here a connection with the promise given to Abraham that his blessing will be extended to the other nations. The land mentioned in v. 7 is the same land previously promised to the patriarchs (Gen 12:3 ff.) (Koole 2001, 283). V. 7 refers to exile, shame, disgrace, poverty but also to the promise of double portion, inheritance and everlasting joy. The Israelites were deported into the exile but they will get back their land, which will be their permanent possession.

However, the promise of salvation will be realised completely through upholding of the Lord's justice.

The three are parallel moves from negating grief and despair to jubilant celebration. In context, the transformation is from powerless indebtedness to the restoration of dignity and viability ... The third rhetorical feature is a series of 'theys' in verses 3b–4. 'They' are those who are addressed by the gospel of Jubilee and so are restored to fullness of life and joy.

BRUEGGEMANN 1998, 215

66 "It has also been rightly pointed out that the description of Israel's deliverance has shifted away from Second Isaiah's portrayal of captivity and exile to that of release from economic slavery within the land. Of course, this shift reflects the changing historical context of Third Isaiah, who has simply refocused the initial promise of Second Isaiah. Again, the familiar theme of Third Isaiah returns, that aliens and foreigners will serve them (60:10, 16) and the wealth of the nations come to them (60:5)." (Childs 2001, 506).

Everlasting joy and stability of life form a contrast with shame, disgrace and affliction. Renewal of the people and restoration of the properties have created a functional revitalisation of the communal life. V. 7 says that the people will receive a double portion in the land instead of their shame, which reflects also the text of Is 54:3–4 in a way that the renovation of the ruined land will bring a new property ownership for the Lord's people. A new political-economic relationship is proclaimed here between the afflicted people and the strangers (61:5–6). With the new right to possess the land and with the rebuilding of the old devastated ruins will end the public humiliation and disgrace of all those who did not have any right. The promise of freedom in the exile has been reformulated into the promise of freedom for the afflicted at home (61:1–2, 7). The essence of expectation of salvation is described with the specific term 'everlasting joy' in 61:7.

3.1.3 Isaiah 61:8–9

The Lord speaks in his own name in vv. 8–9.⁶⁷ These verses confirm the message and the prophetic authority mentioned in vv. 1–3b (Blenkinsopp 2003, 228). The result of the Lord's action will be evident to the whole world. The Israelites will be known and seen as the chosen, blessed nation among the others (vv. 7, 9).

The prophet speaks mainly to the sufferers of economic-financial slavery (vv. 1–2). Robbery and wrong are connected with the abusive society and economic slavery (v. 8a). The Lord speaks about the necessity of justice. The Lord will give recompense and make an everlasting covenant with his people (v. 8b).⁶⁸

Descendants of the generation of whom the Lord speaks in v. 8b will be recognised as the blessed people among the nations. This promise is given to the afflicted, needy and to those who mourn. The prophet brings good news and

67 The speaker is God who confirms the word of the servant figure. See e.g. Childs (2001, 506).

68 This verse is very similar to "see, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him" (Is 40:10). The Lord's recompense will appear with his coming in 40:10 but here in 61:8 his recompense will be seen in his self-presentation. "Next to this connection with DI, the reference to the second Song of the Servant is important. Therein the latter has declared: 'Yet surely my justice (*mišpâti*) is with YHWH, and my recompense (*p^eʿûllâti*) with my God' (49:4; cf. 50:8). 'Justice' and 'recompense' make up here one pair of words, in 61:8 a collocation. The connection between these two verses is not far-fetched. It rests on the connection of 49:4 with 40:10, already made by DI himself. As the 'justice/recompense' of the Servant were safe with YHWH, so he who loves 'justice', will grant to the afflicted and to those who mourn, 'their recompense'" (Beuken 1989, 430–431).

new things to all of them and the Lord gives the guarantee of his everlasting covenant and everlasting joy to his listeners and their descendants (Beuken 1989, 434). V. 8 underlines that the Lord loves justice and hates robbery and wrong.⁶⁹ V. 8 says that the Lord himself maintains justice and the word-pair 'love' and 'hate' reflects the Lord's acceptance and rejection.⁷⁰ Robbery can be one of the main reasons why some people are oppressed, such as the poor, the broken-hearted, the prisoners and the captives described in v. 1. Robbery can be done by foreigners, or somebody from the Israelites as well.⁷¹ However, through upholding justice, the Lord's people will be free.

There are some similarities between v. 3b and v. 9. the Lord's people will be called oaks of righteousness and his planting and all of them with their descendants will be acknowledged as the Lord's blessed people. One of the main reasons for this is the Lord's action of justice toward his people and his faithful confirmation of the everlasting covenant (v. 8). The Lord's speech in v. 9 refers to the Abrahamic promises.⁷² The restored nations, which are Abraham's descendants, are the Lord's blessed people. The promise of blessings given to Abraham refers not only to the Israelites but also to all generations of the earth. Vv. 8–9 confirm that the future of the Lord's people is guaranteed by the everlasting covenant, i.e. the Abrahamic covenantal blessings.

Chapter 61 is more concerned with the salvation of Israel but their salvation and blessing will be known among all nations. Accordingly, some scholars have found an allusion to the universal work of the Lord's Servant (e.g. Is 49:24 ff.) (Koole 2001, 292). This is not correct because it is obvious from the text that the Lord will bring his restoration and blessings first upon his chosen, covenant people and then their blessing will be acknowledged by all other nations. The particularistic revelation and election of Israel at a certain point in history have been directed and guided towards the inclusion of all nations in the revealed relationship with the Lord. However, only the coming messianic time will bring dominance of good, justice and peace on the Lord's creation.

69 e.g. Deut 32:4; Is 58; Zeph 3:5.

70 e.g. 56:6; 57:8; 60:15; 66:5, 10.

71 e.g. Deut 28:31; Is 3:14; 10:2; 59.

72 Also, the Abrahamic tradition reflects the similar situation, such as the people's worries about the land and demographic survival. Abraham received the promises of the land and descendants (Gen 15:5) and they will become a great chosen nation with their own land (Gen 12:2; 15:7, 18–21). The similar words, especially in Is 61:8–9, speak about this as well (Blenkinsopp 2003, 230).

3.1.4 Isaiah 61:10–11

Here we may find the structure of vv. 10–11:

- v. 10a He has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness
- v. 10b as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels
- v. 11a for as the earth brings forth its shoots
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up
- v. 11b so the Lord God will cause righteousness
and praise to spring up before all the nations

V. 10a is very similar to v. 11b. The word-pair *salvation/righteousness* is repeated with the words *righteousness/praise*. The word 'righteousness' is repeated while the word 'praise' may be an alternative for 'salvation' and 'righteousness'.⁷³ The person greatly rejoices in the Lord because the Lord will inaugurate a new order of justice and righteousness through his person and mission.⁷⁴ Furthermore, the reason for his joy is the garments of salvation, the robe of righteousness, the fruitful earth and garden and the Lord's righteousness and praise before all nations as well.

The clothes of righteousness and salvation will be given to all those to whom the prophet has been sent. The prophet is clothed with salvation and righteousness in order to bring a garment of praise and salvation to the afflicted and those who mourn (vv. 3, 10). The speaker has received the anointing from the Lord in order to bring the garland instead of ashes, gladness instead of mourning, praise instead of faint spirit (v. 3).

The 'anointing' by the spirit of God chooses, commissions, enables the prophetic figure and gives him his message as well as the authority to proclaim it. The coming of the preacher anointed with the spirit is a

73 Furthermore, we may find here so many word-pairs, such as: to clothe/to cover, to deck/to adorn, bridegroom/bride, garland/jewels, earth/garden, brings forth its shoots/causes to spring up. Thus, we may say that this passage is made very skilfully and poetically.

74 "The Lord's action is beneficial for the prophet himself and then for the world as well ... it is significant for the identity of 'the prophet' that his announcement of consolation results in a shout of joy (vv. 10–11), in which he also speaks on behalf of the afflicted, because he shares with them the experience that salvation and righteousness are granted by God." (Beuken 1989, 440).

characteristic of the coming age. In fact, he is the announcer and introducer of the time of salvation; the spirit of God causes him to usher in the long awaited day of God.

MA 1999, 200

In v. 11 this event is presented by the symbolic usage of the fruitful earth and the blooming garden. The Lord's activities in nature represent his care for all creation. He speaks about his future when creation will be renewed because he will bring the new world throughout the activity of his Spirit (e.g. Is 44:3; 61:1) and through his Word (Is 55:10 ff.) (Koole 2001, 296). V. 11 speaks that the new seeds and fruits, which symbolise the new order of the Lord's justice and praise, will be acknowledged by all the nations (Childs 2001, 506).

The symbolic picture of the bride and the bridegroom reflects also the new time when the Lord will be unified with his people in a perfect love and harmony on the new earth.⁷⁵ A bridegroom's garland and a bride's jewels are symbols for joy, intimate relationship, salvation and peace with him. "The variation on the marriage metaphor exhibits a lively use of past tradition and the most urgent employment of metaphorical speech to picture the coming salvation." (Achtemeier 1982, 91).

The time of mourning, oppression, faint spirit will be over. The hymn sung by an individual speaks about the Lord's saving deeds (v. 10). The clothing with salvation and righteousness refer to the beginning of the full realisation of the Lord's new order. Furthermore, it speaks about the transformation of nature that refers to the coming age through the ministry of the anointed person.

The joy expressed in the end, however, does not concern the person or office of the speaker. Rather, it concerns the consequence for the community of Zion (v. 11). The speaker is of only instrumental importance. The object of the Lord's salvation and righteousness is the community that will be filled with righteousness and praise. The vibrant reality of economic rehabilitation—expressed as Jubilee year—is likened to the flourishing of a productive garden that will be fruitful and blossom and produce.

BRUEGGEMANN 1998, 218

75 The intimate relationship between the bride and the bridegroom can be experienced in a place such as garden (Song 4:12–5:1; 6:2, 11; 8:13).

Therefore, economic restoration, articulated as the Jubilee year, is associated with a fruitful garden. The restored community will flourish and create justice and righteousness in a healthy reconstituted society.

3.2 *The Speaker of Isaiah 61:1–7, 10–11*

This chapter has a variation of speakers. In vv. 1–7 and 10–11 a human speaker speaks in the first person and the centre of the chapter has an oracle in the first person spoken by the Lord himself. The oracles of human agent and the Lord are closely connected.

Watts emphasises that in Is 61 the speaker gives some rules regarding the renovation of Jerusalem and privileges of priests and ministers. He does not give any explanation who exactly that person is but speculates that some of these speeches may come from different speakers in Is 61.⁷⁶ Furthermore, some other scholars falsely interpret vv. 1–4 as the mission of the Israelites. However, it is obvious that T1 describes the Spirit coming from the outside and empowering a person to proclaim and perform the Lord's specific ministry (Knight 1985, 50–51). Hence, the speaker here cannot be the community of the Israelites because the Israelites would then have a ministry directed at themselves. On the other hand some others underline that the speaker in chapter 61 has his own unique, independent mission.⁷⁷

Even though Is 61 does not call the speaker directly 'servant'⁷⁸ or 'prophet', some other interpreters make a conclusion that the mission of that person in 61:1 ff. is identical with the mission of the prophet-servant in D1 (Childs 2001,

76 A healing preacher is very similar to Ezra and his ministry of the restoration of the covenantal relationship and establishment of legal rules (Ezra 9–10; Neh 8–9). He brings a message of healing, comfort, care and freedom to the poor, the imprisoned, the oppressed, the wounded, the mourners (vv. 1–3). The second speaker is an administrator (vv. 4–7). He is more concerned with renovation of the ancient ruins and devastations of many former generations. Watts makes a conclusion that an administrator has authority to restore the temple in vv. 10–11. And the last speaker, according to Watts, is the most important in Is 61. He is the Lord himself (v. 8a) who loves justice and hates robbery and wrong. He is the one who renovates the everlasting covenant with his people (v. 9). His blessings go to all nations throughout his chosen people. Accordingly, Is 61 contains specific ministries of preaching and restoration. The main essential role is presented in the Lord himself who embodies in himself these two ministries. Through his anointing both of these roles are successful (Watts 2005a, 871–872, 875–876). Watts' explanation is very speculative because his idea of three different speakers cannot be found in the text of Is 61.

77 E.g. Zimmerli (1969); Westermann (1969); Whybray (1975).

78 Duhm was first who pointed out that in four passages (42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12), there seems to be reference to an individual 'Servant of the Lord' (Duhm 1922). The

502).⁷⁹ Is 61 does not call the person directly ‘servant’ or ‘prophet’, it is possible to find the description of an individual anointed⁸⁰ prophet and his prophetic ministry in Is 65–66 and in some D1 passages.⁸¹ In that context, chapter 61 may speak about the speaker as a prophet-servant as well (Westermann 1969, 366; Whybray 1975, 239–240). This mission includes binding up all those who are broken and the proclamation of freedom to the imprisoned. Is 61 is reminiscent of the description of call in Is 42:1–4 and 49:1–6 as well. It is clear that the anointed one is a concrete person, somebody like a post-exilic prophet whose task was to proclaim the message of salvation for the people who had returned from the exile (Westermann 1969, 353, 365).

The Aramaic Targum, as well as some scholars today, recognizes that the anointed person in vv. 1–7 is the prophet Trito-Isaiah himself (Smith 2009, 629). Furthermore, Cyrus himself could be called anointed one (e.g. Is 45:1). Cyrus, even though he was a non-Israelite, was chosen and anointed for the Lord’s concrete service. He was anointed by the Spirit to set the Lord’s people free from foreign dominion and oppression. He was a deliverer in socio-economic and political-military terms. His deliverance brought restoration of the covenant relationship between the Lord and his people as well (Groningen 1990, 615–

literature on the unity and meaning of these servant songs is voluminous. Also, views regarding the servant’s identity range from the nation Israel (or a remnant) to the prophet himself, to a messianic figure. See e.g. Wilcox and Paton-Williams (1988, 79–102); Strauss (1995, 239–249).

79 These scholars have tried to discern connections between the mission of a speaker and his personality according to some D1’s passages. The mission of the servant prophet is described e.g. in 42:1 ff.; 48:15 ff.; 49:1, 3; 50:4 ff.; 52:13–53:12. D1 describes that person as a suffering servant and prophetic person. Beuken underlines that the offspring mentioned in chapter 61 may be both an individual and a cooperative entity that is embodied in a description of a suffering servant in D1 (Beuken 1989, 432). Thus, D1’s presentation of the prophetic servant can be found in chapter 61 and the Lord’s spirit will be given to the offspring of the servant (e.g. 59:21) as well. Here we may find similarity between the anointed one in 61:1 and the heritage of the Lord’s servants (54:17). The mission of his own calling in Is 61:1–3 is similar to the tasks of a servant mentioned in D1 (40:1; 42:7; 49:9, 13; 51:3, 12; 52:9) (Childs 2001, 505).

80 “Although the original jubilee legislation required no individual mediator for its actualisation, in Isaiah 61:1–4 notions of an anointed *go’el* (redeemer) figure are associated with the realisation of the justice, equality, and general shalom of which the jubilee has become a symbol or ‘type’. This messianic sense will persist in later literature, such as Daniel 9 and 11QMelchizedek, where the realisation of the jubilee promises continue to be associated with the coming of an ‘anointed one’” (Bergsma 2007, 3).

81 E.g. 40:1–2, 9; 42:1–4; 48:15 ff.; 49:1–6, 9, 13; 50:4 ff.; 51:3, 12; 52:9.

61:6). Cyrus, as the Lord's servant (cf. Is 42:1–4), was chosen for a certain mission but he passed that mission to another person and his followers. That person has the Lord's authority to change and reshape the situation of community.

We may say that the main speaker in 61:1–3 is an individual prophet because his prophetic task is connected with the anointing of the Spirit and sending on a specific mission.⁸² For instance, Blenkinsopp recognises that person in vv. 1–3 as the one of the Lord's servants of whom chapters 65–66 speak. He is empowered with the Spirit of the Lord to bring good news to the oppressed (vv. 1–3) (Blenkinsopp 2003, 64, 220–221). His good news⁸³ has a powerful influence on the people and society.

However, in 61:1–2 we may notice some development of the term 'good news' and its usage for new circumstances. The speaker proclaims freedom, i.e. the Jubilee legislation. The law of Jubilee prescribes liberty from slavery every fifty year. It is obvious that this term here refers to the postexilic situation and the people who had returned to the land. This person brings good news of Jubilee, i.e. salvation, freedom and restoration. The Lord gives his authority to this person through the anointing with his Spirit who brings a radical newness.⁸⁴ All his activities are directed toward the poor, the broken-hearted, the powerless and the marginalised people. The mission of the anointed person in this case is to bring restoration of a community (Brueggemann 1998, 212–213). This restoration comes with the favourable Jubilee year.

The characteristics of his ministry for the poor and needy are closely tied up with loyalty to the Lord's will because the Lord loves justice and hates robbery and iniquity, which is obvious in the Jubilee and Sabbath year legislations as well. He is an agent of the year of the Lord's favour for the oppressed, broken and poor (Hanson 1995, 224). After the time of mourning, the time will come

82 Exod 3:13–15; 1Sam 15:1; 2Kgs 2:4; Is 6:8; 9:7; 42:19; 48:16; Jer 25:17; 26:12–15.

83 The root and derivatives of the word בְּשִׂרָה can be found thirty times in the Old Testament and it means 'bring news'. Usually for messengers this news was good news (e.g. 1Sam 31:9; 2Sam 1:20; 4:10; 18:19, 25 ff.; Ps 68:11 (heb. 12); Is 40:9; 41:27; 52:7; 60:6; 61:1; Lk 4:16–21; 1Cor 15:54–56; Col 1:5, 6; 2:13–15) (Harris, Waltke and Archer 2006, 291 בְּשִׂרָה). The word בְּשִׂרָה occurs also in Is 40:9 and 52:7 in a way that the announcement of a special event has been already happening (Westermann 1969, 366). The messenger of good news is sent to serve (e.g. 41:27; 52:7). It is most likely that 'to bring good news' in Is 61 may refer to the message of the Lord's salvation and his return to his people. In 61:1 the term 'to proclaim' echoes also the similar usage of it for the exiles (49:24–25) and the daughter of Zion (52:2).

84 E.g. David, as a radically new person called for the ministry, was anointed by the Spirit of the Lord: "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward." (1Sam 16:13).

when the Lord will restore a community by his justice and freedom. The people will be restored in the land (Is 61:5–7) because the future of the Israelites is guided by the Lord's faithfulness to his covenant.

3.3 *Conclusion on Isaiah 61*

The anointed person has received the authority by the Spirit of the Lord to perform a specific ministry. This ministry brings the transformation of people's life and their society, i.e. renewal of the broken community. That covenant community includes the poor, the broken-hearted, the oppressed, the captives, the prisoners and the descendants as well.

Regarding the determination of the anointed person in Is 61 this study concludes that king Cyrus and the prophet Trito-Isaiah were that person who partially fulfilled the mission. To some extent, that person may be Cyrus because he was chosen to liberate the Israelites from the exilic foreign oppression. Cyrus did not carry out completely the mission described in Is 61. He is not the one who calls the Israelites 'his people' and he is not the one who greatly rejoices in the Lord because of the Lord's salvation, righteousness and justice. Cyrus, as a non-Israelite was chosen just for a certain task. Cyrus fulfilled one part of the mission in his time throughout his declaration to free the Israelites from bondage. However, the end of the exile did not bring the period of complete salvation for the Lord's people.

Description of an anointed person and his ministry reflect in itself the old tradition, the future and the eschatological hope. As already mentioned, some scholars interpret 'anointing with the Spirit' as a promise for the future time. That promise is partially fulfilled in the time of Trito-Isaiah. Cyrus and the prophet Trito-Isaiah have partially fulfilled the mission described in Is 61. The complete fulfilment of that promise will be realised in the future time by the Spirit of the Lord and his anointed one. This person is also a mediator of the covenant between God and his people. He is the anointed one who will bring reconciliation, restoration and renewal of the everlasting covenantal relationship.

Furthermore, we may say that this person has presented himself as well as the prophet-servant and the anointed one/Messiah. The Messiah himself as the light holder will arise upon the Lord's people and in the future he will bring his light and salvation to his creation. Hence, the Messiah will continue to bring good news in the year of the Lord's favour. Consequently, the year of the Lord's favour has been also partially fulfilled in the time of $\tau\iota$.

Is 61 uses the Hebrew word דָּרוֹר , which means liberty referring to the release of slaves and lost property in the year of the Lord's favour. Is 61 uses very similar language to Lev 25:10 and the year of Jubilee. It is obvious that this reference

to freedom in Is 61 refers to the practice of the Jubilee in Lev 25. This word is used only once in the book of Isaiah and refers to the proclamation of good news to the imprisoned, the broken, the troubled and the needy. The year of Jubilee refers to the renovation and restoration of the impoverished hopeless slaves and freedom for the captives. The Lord's favour in his time will bring a change into the life of his people by the release of debt-slaves and return back to families and properties. All those who are imprisoned because of their financial crisis will experience liberty. That kind of liberty brings freedom from the bonds of financial oppression. The captives are the people imprisoned because of debts. Liberation of the captives means freedom from the financial debt crisis. All who suffer because of socio-economic exploitation need to be free and renewed. The renewed people with the new name 'the planting of the Lord' and 'oaks of righteousness' (v. 3) will renovate their surroundings as well.

The Jubilee news brings a radical transformation and restoration of community, which is described by the series of 'insteads' in Is 61: garland, gladness, praise, double portion, inheritance *instead* of ashes, mourning, faint spirit, shame, disgrace. With a radical restoration the transformed community will be ready to rebuild its ruined and destroyed surroundings.

Cyrus' declaration was some kind of 'the Jubilee proto-declaration' as well. His proto-declaration released the Israelites from the exile and they got the opportunity to return back to their property. 'To bring good news' reflects the institution of the year of Jubilee or the Sabbatical year as well. In Is 61 the year of the Lord's favour is described as a historical event for all people.

However, the promises of an announcement of good news, the year of the Lord's favour, the renewal of the creation and the time of complete salvation were not completely fulfilled. The complete fulfilment of these promises will happen in an eschatological time. Nevertheless, good news come from this specific historical happening and will affect other historical events of Israel as well. In harmony with it Jesus decided to quote these Isaiah verses saying that this particular scripture is fulfilled in him (Lk 4:21). Therefore, Jesus Christ started his public mission with the proclamation of good news to the broken-hearted, the poor, the captives and the needy. His public mission reflects the mission described in Is 61. The similarity of the description of a specific ministry in Is 61 and Jesus' public ministry in Lk 4:18–19 has been taken into consideration by most Christian scholars.

In sum, I would concur that the final shape of the Isaianic corpus is such that a resonance between the eschatological Messiah and the suffering servant was soon heard by the Christian church as a legitimate reader response to its scriptures in linking servant and Messiah. However, to

read back a 'servant/Messiah' figure into chapter 61 is to blur the Old Testament's own witness by a retrojection of a later, fully developed Christian theology, not yet developed in the book of Isaiah.

CHILDS 2001, 505

Similarities between the Message of Isaiah 58, 61 and the Jubilee Legislation in Leviticus 25

In this chapter we are going to analyse briefly some of the main similarities between the legislation of the Jubilee year in Lev 25 and the prophetic messages of Is 58 and 61. This chapter also draws some conclusions concerning the theme, creating in this way the bridge between the first two chapters, which deal with our theme in the Old Testament, and the fourth chapter, which is concerned with the subject in the New Testament. Before we start to deal with the theme of Sabbath and the year of God's favour in the Gospel of Luke, we are going to review the following indications regarding the relations between the message of Is 58, 61 and the Jubilee legislation in Lev 25.

Is 58:1 mentions a trumpet that is closely connected with the Jubilee year, which is announced by blowing a trumpet¹ (Lev 25:9). The word יִבְלֵל can mean a ram's horn, i.e. a wind instrument. The year of Jubilee was inaugurated by blowing that special kind of trumpet (*yobel*). The speaker in Is 58:1 is called to be like a trumpet voice declaring to the Lord's people their transgression and to the house of Jacob their sins. On the Day of Atonement people confess their sins and transgression as well. The Jubilee year begins on the Day of Atonement, i.e. on the tenth day of the seventh month, which was a fast day (Lev 16:29–31; 25:9) (Koole 2001, 120). Also, one of the main themes of chapter 58 is a theme regarding a fast day as well (Webb 1996, 225–227).

Furthermore, Lev 26:2 presents an exhortation to the Sabbath observance and can be seen as the conclusion of the Jubilee teaching, which is very similar to Is 58:13–14. Is 58:5 speaks about a fast day as (יִּום רְצוֹן) a 'day acceptable' to the Lord while Is 61:2 talks about (שָׁנַת רְצוֹן) the 'year acceptable' to the Lord, i.e. about the year of the Lord's favour. Strong Jubilee themes are present in Is 58²

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- 1 Hartley argues about a connection between the Jubilee and the messianic era in the symbolism of the trumpet. The trumpet needs to be sounded when the exiles return to worship God in Jerusalem (Is 27:13) and when the Messiah enters the holy city in triumph (Zach 9:9–10, 14–16) (Hartley 1992, 447).
 - 2 Although Is 58 does not specifically mention the Jubilee year, there are many similarities between Is 58 and the Jubilee regulations. See e.g. Hanks (1983, 99–103); Weinfeld (1995, 18).

and 61. 'The acceptable year of Jubilee' begins on 'an acceptable day, the Day of Atonement.'³

The description of the unacceptable day of fasting when the people lie down in 'sackcloth and ashes' may be found in Is 58:5.⁴ Is 58 brings details and explains what the acceptable fast day must be. In correlation with the fast day, for example Is 58:6, 10 say that 'the oppressed need to go free' and 'if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted', which is very similar with the description in Is 61:1 'bring good news to the poor;⁵ to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and freedom to the prisoners'. Is 58:6–7 and 61:1 bring the same message regarding the announcement of the same good news to the poor and captives (Westermann 1969, 337). Both these similar references are an obvious indication of the fundamental provision of the Jubilee.⁶

Furthermore, the care for needy, homeless, hungry and naked in Is 58:7 corresponds with the regulations for the Jubilee year in Lev 25:35–37, 47–49, especially to take the homeless into one's house and to provide food for the hungry without charge. Moreover, the phrase 'not to hide yourself from your

3 "That is to say, the 'acceptable year' (Jubilee, Is 61:3) is to be inaugurated by the 'acceptable day' (Is 58:5), the fast Day of Atonement ... Because the fast of the Day of Atonement, prescribed by the law, could scarcely be abandoned, we may say that Isaiah 58:1–12 proposes the proper observance of the one true fast, including the Jubilee provisions for the poor, as opposed to the multiplication of purely religious rites devoid of ethical content (cf. Zech 7:3–7, 8–10)." (Hanks 1983, 99, 100).

4 "The passage next turns to a positive description of what constitutes true piety before God. The ritual of fasting is not rejected out of hand, but redefined by enlarging its parameters." (Childs 2001, 478). About God's chosen fast see Knight (1985, 25–27).

5 "This oracle of Trito-Isaiah's is therefore, indeed, good news. It proclaims to all who are bound by any circumstance that there is freedom to be had in God: to all who mourn and are brokenhearted that they may greatly rejoice in the Lord; to all who are faint of spirit that there is quickening renewal for their lives; to all who are poor that God will reward abundantly; to all who are homeless, helpless, rootless that their lives may be firmly planted; to all who are without God in the world that he favours them and comes to them in mercy." (Achtemeier 1982, 94).

6 "The combination of Isa 61,1–2a and a line from 58,6 via ἀφεσις evokes the Jubilee/Sabbath year. Both texts concern a time pleasing to the Lord (cf. δεκτός in Isa 58,5 LXX and Isa 61,2 LXX; see Isa 49,8 LXX). Moreover, we find that the poor are mentioned in Isa 58 as well as in Isa 61 (58,7 and 61,1). We saw, how the intention of the Jubilee/Sabbath Year is profoundly social in character: restoration of the land through redistribution is a central element. This element is worded in a rather general sense in Isa 61,1–3. However, the addition from Isa 58 calls it even more to attention." (Koet 1989, 33).

own kin' in Is 58:7 is very similar to the idea of 'brother' in the redemption legislation in Lev 25:25, 35–37, 47.

A reference on setting the oppressed and slaves free refers to release from any sort of bondage, especially bondage in the exile. The Jubilee legislation in Lev 25:55 concludes with an important statement that the Israelites are only the Lord's servants⁷ whom he delivered and brought forth out of the land of Egypt (Howell 2003, 6). The metaphors of exile and the exodus are encapsulated in the language of socio-economic liberation in Is 58 and 61. Both chapters transform the nature of liberation putting the theme of liberation from exile as a background to their focus on socio-economic freedom. The practice of socio-economic justice reflects the story of the Lord's deliverance from slavery (Ringe 1995, 68).

The theme of exile is used as a metaphor for poverty, debt slavery, homelessness, captivity. Coming back from exile to the land is presented as liberation from imprisonment by yoke of debt and any kind of oppression and bondage. Furthermore, freedom from captivity means to get the opportunity for the resettlement and restoration of society as well. Liberation from captivity can also mean the transformation of society. This is very similar to Lev 25, in which the legislation of the Jubilee year, especially its regulation regarding the release of slaves, is closely connected with the theme of exodus and the Lord's deliverance (Lev 25:38, 55). Therefore, the people need to practise socio-economic justice in their midst in the same way as the Lord delivered them from slavery and gave them a fresh new start in their land. For that reason, we can say that the images of exodus and freedom have a close link to the themes of socio-economic justice in Lev 25 and Is 58, 61.

The phrase 'to bind up the broken hearted' can be found in 61:1. The description of broken hearted refers to all those who were in bondage and under the 'yoke' of debts. The broken hearted are associated with the poor. Both chapters speak about release and freedom for debt slaves. According to Westermann, the word 'oppressed' in Is 58:6⁸ and 61:1 refer to the group of people who were put in

7 About the servant and the servants in Is 56–66 see Blenkinsopp (2003, 33–34).

8 "In this and the following verse he lists three things that related directly to the needs of that time. The situation appears similar to that a few decades later, in Nehemiah's time. The people felt enslaved and in bondage (Neh 9:36). Part of that bondage was undoubtedly political since they were a Persian colony. This led to oppression from local officials and from powerful neighbours (Neh 4; 4:15) in the form of heavy taxes, usurious loans, and generally unfavourable economic conditions (Neh 5). It also led to enslavement to other Jews when debts could not be repaid (Neh 5:4–5)." (Watts 2005, 843).

prison because of debts.⁹ Furthermore, all other categories mentioned such as prisoners, poor, broken hearted and captives as well (Is 61) are people suffering because of their socio-economic problems and financial crises. These groups of people mentioned in Is 61:1 are suffering because of robbery and iniquity in their society (v. 8). The speaker announces the year of the Lord's favour, which is the message of the Lord's blessings that brings a transformation in human life. The message and action of the speaker in Is 61 have a major impact on socio-economic relations among members of a community and then between the Lord and them. Also, his intention is to bring restoration to a full function of wellbeing. Proclamation of freedom means freedom from debt slavery as well (Lev 25:10; Is 61:1). That kind of freedom brings the new socio-economic order into an individual life and the whole society.

The condition in 58:9b is to remove the yoke among people. This yoke means the heavy financial exploitation (vv. 3, 6). 'The pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil' (v. 9b) refer to ungraceful accusations of those who are in debt slavery and poverty by other members of society. Those kind of exploitation need to be completely eliminated and debt slaves need to be released. Cancellation of every yoke will make a condition for the establishment of social liberation and righteous society. The new condition can be found in v. 10a 'if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted', which describes necessary merciful deeds towards the exploited and humiliated debt slaves, the poor and the needy. Essential resources for life must be shared in order to make a sustainable life possible.

Robbery and any kind of exploitation and captivity must be stopped. The main resources for life must be provided for the needy and the poor. The message of Is 58:5–7 is very similar to the practice of the legislation of the year of Jubilee and the Lord's favour described in Lev 25:8ff., 35–37, 47–49 and Is 61:1–4.¹⁰ The legislation of the Jubilee year encapsulates in itself also the concept of socio-economic justice and a proper relationship between the Lord and his people. Lev 25 gives an assurance of Israel's continuance on the land after their return from the exile by giving the institutions of Jubilee and redemption.

9 See also Westermann (1969).

10 "It was natural for needy persons to turn to their kin for help. Old Testament law provides for needs to be met by relatives, but such close social ties had been broken by exilic and postexilic conditions. It is easier to deny kinship and turn away from those who need aid, but this means to turn away from God. Acceptable worship means not hiding yourself 'from your own flesh'." (Watts 2005, 843).

We may say that the exile was seen symbolically as a time of debt slavery and return as an act of redemption. Also, Is 58 and 61 (also entire unit chs. 40–66) describe indirectly and metaphorically the debt slavery of the Israelites, the exilic time as the period of slavery and the Lord as a Redeemer. Is 58:1–14 and 61:1–4 include the message of redemption and the Jubilee release laws from Lev 25; “... although Isaiah 40–66 makes heavy use of the concept of the Lord as redeemer and the return from exile as an act of redemption from debt-slavery, this is only one among many metaphors the prophet employs to triangulate God, Israel, and the exile, and in only certain instances does it draw on the context of the laws of redemption for land and debtors (Lev 25).” (Bergsma 2007, 193).

Is 58:8 speaks about ‘light’ that will break forth like the dawn, which may illustrate healing, protection and security. Here the word ‘light’ is used in a similar way to Is 61:6 ff. The Lord himself is described as ‘your light’ and he will arise and shine for Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be renovated by the Lord’s attentiveness.¹¹ The Lord will accept the prayers and worship of those people who will practise mercy and justice towards others. Mistreatment, exploitation, selfishness, greed and disgrace need to be abolished and nullified in the community of the faithful.¹²

The phrase ‘proclaim freedom’ in Is 61:2 may be closely connected with the announcement of the seventh year release but it is hard to conclude that directly from the text.¹³ Westermann has found an interesting connection between the two admonitions concerning the Sabbath in Is 56:1 ff. and 58:13–14 (Westermann 1969, 340). These verses make a framework for the whole section composed of chapters 56–58. The institutions of the Jubilee year and the Sabbath year can be also found in a sabbatarian context of Lev 23:1–3 and 25:1–7.¹⁴

11 About God’s faithfulness and covenant with his people (61:8–9) see Smith (2009, 640–643).

12 “The allusion to the Jubilee/Sabbath year implies a call to conversion for those addressed: in particular for the wealthier ones who live at the expense of others. We find a parallel in Jer 34 (41 LXX), 8–22 deals with the proclamation of freedom for the Hebrew slaves (cf. Deut 15,12). The king proclaims freedom (Jer 41,8 LXX: καλέσαι ἀφεσιν). The people themselves, however, and especially their leaders, will have to put these measures into practice. The release of slaves is connected to the conversion of the people (Jer 34,15).” (Koet 1989, 34).

13 Is 61:1–2a and 58:6 alludes to the Servant passages of Isaiah and to the legislation of Jubilee (Lev 25:8–55) and Sabbatical year (Exod 23:10–11; Lev 25:1–7; Deut 15:1–18) (Moore 1995, 92).

14 “In sum, nearly all the injunctions of Is 58 find a parallel in Lev 25. No other biblical legislation (i.e. Deut 15; Exod 21:2–11) corresponds so completely. This may explain why the promised blessings for fidelity to the Lord in Is 58 (vv. 8, 11, 14) are thematically similar

The Sabbath in Is 58 is described as a holy and honourable day.¹⁵ The main purposes for observing the Sabbath day in Is 58¹⁶ are to overcome socio-economic difficulties in society, to prevent those who are doing wrong, to assist those who suffer and give admission into the community of faithful. The proper keeping of the Sabbath day is connected with the practice of socio-economic justice. Observing the Sabbath day and socio-economic justice in a community of the faithful generate a righteous relationship between the people and the Lord.¹⁷ All those who practice injustice, violate the Sabbath day, disregard the Lord and his ordinances are separated from the people who observe the Sabbath day as an honourable and holy day separated from the other days of the week and who actualise socio-economic justice in their life (Koole 2001, 157). In order to participate in the Lord's salvation, the people need to keep the Sabbath day, know justice and act righteously. Those people will partake in reshaping of their community as well.

Freedom will happen in an acceptable time, such as during the Jubilee year (Lev 25:10; Is 61) or in the time of the Sabbatical year (Exod 21:2; Deut 15:1–18; Jer 34:14; Ezek 46:17). That special time will reveal complete liberation from oppression, exploitation and poverty. 'Year of the Lord's favour' and 'day of his vengeance' represent a new era in which the Lord will fulfil his promise of salvation and blessings and his time of grace will arrive in that coming time.¹⁸

to those of Lev 25:18–19 and Lev 26:3–13, including bountiful rain (Is 58:11, Lev 26:4a), the divine presence (Is 58:8d; Lev 26:11–12), divine military defence (Is 58:8c; Lev 26:6–8), and the consumption (אכל, cf. Is 58:14c; Lev 25:19, 26:5) of produce of the ancestral land. All these blessings are tied particularly to the proper observation of the Sabbath (cf. Is 58:13; Lev 25:2–7; 26:2, 34–35)." (Bergsma 2007, 196).

15 "Here in Isa 58.13 the motif of rest for men has completely disappeared. This makes the holiness attaching to the day all the more strongly emphasised: it is the holy day. The name here given it is nothing short of 'the holy (day) of Yahweh', and as such it is honourable." (Westermann 1969, 341).

16 Blenkinsopp argues that at the time of the composition of Is 58:13–14 was not known what was forbidden and what was permitted on Sabbath (Blenkinsopp 2003, 182).

17 "... the closing exhortation to keep ... the Sabbath (13–14) seems like an anticlimax, until we remember the connection between the Sabbath and justice that was made back in 56:1–2. The exploitation of workers denounced in verse 3 may well have involved denying them the rest that the Sabbath provided, and the idle words of verse 13 were perhaps the glib rationalisations that justified such behaviour (cf. 59:3–4). In any case, the call for true Sabbath observance, like the call for true fasting, is a call for a changed heart and life, not just the more meticulous observance of a ritual." (Webb 1996, 226–227).

18 Lk 4:16–19 include the promises proclaimed by Trito-Isaiah which have been fulfilled in the ministry of the final Suffering Servant, Jesus Christ (Achtmeier 1982, 91–93).

Is 61 speaks about a partial fulfilment of the Jubilee year in the time of T1. The Jubilee year is indirectly presented mainly as a time¹⁹ that will completely come in an eschaton. The main task of the speaker is to announce freedom to the poor, oppressed, captives, broken hearted and mourners. However, those kinds of people will be completely liberated from their affliction in the messianic and eschatological time. The year of the Lord's favour in Is 61:1 gives a simultaneous eschatological messianic meaning to Lev 25:10. That time will bring a complete transformation of human life and the whole creation.

Most scholars agree that the word דָּרֹר in Is 61:1 means release, freedom, liberty to all those who are poor, imprisoned, captives, slaves. Also, this word in Lev 25:10 means liberty and refers to the release of slaves and property in the Jubilee year.²⁰ Is 61:1 ff. relates to the Torah vision of Jubilee described in Lev 25. The year of the Lord's favour brings a transformation in human life and the whole society. Renewal and restoration of the Israelites will generate revitalisation of their communal life as well.

All the series of transformative verbs in Is 61,²¹ such as 'garland vs. ashes; gladness vs. mourning; praise vs. faint spirit' refer towards the proclamation of the year of the Lord's favour. The Jubilee message is good news of the transformed life released from debts, poverty, brokenness and any kind of bondage. Transformed individuals will be able to rebuild their ruined cities and with that rebuilding they will establish their new transformed community as well. 'Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations' (Is 58:12) corresponds with Is 61:4 'they shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations'. 58:12 and 61:4 speak about the same promise regarding the renovation and rebuilding of the ancient

19 "The messianic age is described as 'the year of the Lord's favour' (v. 2a), and idea which draws at least some of its inspiration from that of the jubilee. One of the prophet's tasks is to 'proclaim liberty' (*qara deror*, v. 1c), a distinctive phrase found in the jubilee regulations (Lev 25:10). In the messianic age, according to the prophet's message, the poor and oppressed will be freed from their suffering (Is 61:2b–9). The expression 'day of vengeance of our God' seems to indicate that freedom for the oppressed will be accompanied by judgment on the oppressors (cf. the 'day of the Lord' in Am 5:18–20 and Joel 2:28–32). What is more, in accordance with the principle of 'restoration' in the jubilee year, ruined cities and deserted habitations will be restored (v. 4)." (Baker 1998, 52).

20 Is 61:1 (MT) reminds on the same expression in Lev 25:10 and the Jubilee legislation, while Jer 34:8, 15, 17 refers to the legislation of the Sabbatical year in a close connection with the exile (Moore 1995, 92).

21 See e.g. Webb (1996, 236).

ruins (Seitz 2001, 505). The promise described in 58:12 is a conditional promise while 61:4 is an unconditional one referring to the whole people, not only to a group of people within the community. The speaker of Is 58 and 61 also clearly underlines the mission to free the restored Israel from forms of economic oppression, which is captivity and debt slavery (Halvorson-Taylor 2011, 138). It is obvious that the main message of both chapters refers to establishing a just society and righteous relationships without slavery or exploitation.

In both chapters, the name of the people is changed. In 58:12b the new name is 'repairer, restorer' while in 61:6a the new name is 'priests, ministers of the Lord'. The 'new name' for the people and the city of Jerusalem is a common theme in TI (58:12; 60:14, 18; 61:3–4; 62:2, 4, 12). They will get a new name 'repairer, restorer' because they will be the people who make a new sustainable community. These verses are similar to Is 61:4 ff. because the promise is the same and the evidence of the new salvation is the assignment of new names as well (Westermann 1969, 340). Conditional obedience in chapter 58:6–9a, 9b–12, 13–14 will bring salvation while chapter 61 speaks about the unconditional promise.

58:9–12 speaks about the promise of renewal and coming righteousness, which can be also found described in a similar way in 61:3b–7. The renovation shall be done by the righteous people (58:7–12) who might be called oaks of righteousness (61:3–4), i.e. all those who will be transformed and restored will become like oaks of righteousness full of strength, vitality and stability. The transformed Israelites will be called priests, ministers of the Lord. They will be mediators between other people and the Lord. Some scholars see here a connection with the Abrahamic promise of land and blessing, which will be extended upon the other nations as well.²² Even though the Israelites were deported into exile, they will receive back their land that will become their possession.

Is 61:6 speaks about the promise of a double portion, inheritance and everlasting joy. However, the promise of coming salvation will be completely fulfilled throughout actualisation of the Lord's justice and righteousness. The basic of the expectation of coming salvation is described with the term 'everlasting joy' in Is 61:7 (Beuken 1989, 428–429). The main reason for the speaker's great joy is the coming of the Lord's salvation. The calling and mission described in Is 61 are connected with rejoicing. The speaker shows his personal joy about things that the Lord has done for him and then through his personal experience he announces the message of salvation (Is 61:10–11).

22 About nationalism and universalism in Isaiah see e.g. Schultz (2009, 141–142).

The garments with salvation and righteousness indicate the inauguration of the full realisation of the Lord's new order. The metaphorical picture of the bride and the bridegroom's relationship mirrors the new time when the Lord himself will be united with his people in a perfect love and concord on the new earth. The unifying relationship between the bride and the bridegroom, such as the Lord and his people, should be experienced in a place like a garden.

The Lord's main object of his salvation and righteousness is that community and its socio-economic rehabilitation (Knight 1985, 55). The living reality of its socio-economic treatment is expressed as Jubilee year. The vibrant reality of a rehabilitated community is linked to the flourishing of a productive garden as well (Brueggemann 1998, 218). Socio-economic restoration and rehabilitation, articulated as Jubilee year, is associated with a blossoming garden. Accordingly, that restored society will actualise and perform socio-economic justice and righteousness in its healthy reconstituted environment.

Is 58:11a 'the Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong' corresponds with Is 61:7 'instead of their shame my people will receive a double portion, and instead of disgrace they will rejoice in their inheritance; and so they will inherit a double portion in their land'.²³ Transformed individuals and the whole community will be ready to receive the inheritance of their ancestor Jacob (Is 58:14). The Lord will bless his people with a double portion in their land and they will rejoice in the inheritance of their ancestor Jacob, which means the Lord will bless them with the abundant crops and yield that corresponds with Lev 25:18–22.

Furthermore, 58:11b 'you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail' is similar to Is 61:11a 'for as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up'. Is 58:10b–12 explains the condition of a society, which practises socio-economic justice and mercy towards the needy. The metaphors of the strong bones, a watered garden, a spring of water and waters that not fail speak about the blessings that transform life and bring the release. Society will be free from external imperial attacks and rebuilding of ruins will be possible only if the society would practise socio-economic justice among its members. The Lord will be present too and they will be able to rebuild their society. The promise of the restoration and renovation of the inheritance and the people in Is 58:14 can be compared with the idea of restoration of property and family in the year of Jubilee described in Lev 25 as well.

23 Webb interprets vv. 7–8 as the expression of a relationship in which discipline, healing and renewal, are closely connected with the grace of God (Webb 1996, 236).

The Lord's presence and dwelling are mentioned directly or indirectly in all three chapters. In Lev 25, the people will recognise the Lord's invisible presence throughout his abundant blessings of the usufruct of the land. The Lord is an exclusive owner, master of the land and his people. His ownership is closely and intimately connected with his covenantal people and the land. The Lord is present through his consecration of the cyclical holy time of Sabbath, Sabbatical year and Jubilee.

The Lord's glory in Is 58 is the visible aspect of the presence of the Lord. The Lord's glory, i.e. his presence is the reward to Israel. The people of the Lord will be able to experience his presence in their inward and outward experiences. Transformation of an individual and a community of believers come with and through the Lord's presence. His guidance brings them into the right way and transforms them into his image. In order to receive that reward and to participate in his glorious presence, human beings need to be exalted in the life of the Lord and his divine nature.

Is 61:3 speaks about Zion, which in that context also means the restoration and renewal of the covenant relationship. The Lord's glory will be in Zion (e.g. Is 4:5 ff.) and it will become a central place for the Lord's salvation in the future. In the restored Zion, the restored people will worship the Lord. The Lord himself will dwell and reign in Zion in the new coming time. In order to experience Zion's comfort mentioned in Is 61, the people need to experience freedom from socio-economic, spiritual and political oppression.

Furthermore, Is 61:11 symbolically presents the fruitful earth and the blooming garden showing the Lord's care and activities in nature for all his creation. Is 61 describes the coming of the messianic time that will bring the dominance of goodness, justice and peace on the earth while the transformed and renewed people of the Lord will delightfully worship him. In the Lord's renewed world, all creation will be renewed by the activity of his Spirit and through his Word. The new seeds and fruits in Is 61:11 symbolise the new order of the Lord's justice and praise, which will be recognised by all nations. Socio-economic restoration, which is presented as the Jubilee year, is associated with a fruitful garden in Is 61. Accordingly, the renewed community will flourish and produce socio-economic justice in a healthy reconstituted community of the faithful.

The Sabbath Day and the Year of God's Favour in the Gospel of Luke

In this chapter we are going to discuss the theme of the Sabbath day and the year of God's favour in the Gospel of Luke. The themes of Sabbath-Jubilee will be compared with the mentioned concepts of the sacred cyclical times of Sabbath-Sabbath year-Jubilee year in the Old Testament. But before that, we are going to analyse the Lukan theme of the Sabbath day.

1 The Sabbath Day in the Gospel of Luke

Jesus attends synagogue regularly on the Sabbath day, as it was his habit. Some scholars have found six main Sabbath passages in the Gospel of Luke (Lk 4:16–30; 4:31–37; 6:1–5; 6:6–11; 13:10–17; 14:1–6).¹ In all six Sabbath passages it is obvious that Jesus' piety was not the same as the piety of the Jewish leaders because on the Sabbath day Jesus did different things, such as healing of the sick, helping the needy, teaching people.²

Luke underlines that after Jesus' teaching in the synagogue in Nazareth, Jesus has taught with authority on the Sabbath day in the synagogue at Capernaum. The author speaks about the Sabbath healing in the synagogue in Capernaum when Jesus rebuked and ordered a demon to go out of the possessed man (Lk 4:31–37). We may suppose that the synagogue³ was full of religious people.

1 E.g. Schweitzer (1984); Bock (1994).

2 “‘What is goodness?’ the Pharisees would ask themselves, and they would answer with a multitude of detailed ordinances in the midst of which they lost the essential truth. ‘What is goodness?’ Jesus would ask. His answer was to go back to the essential thrust of the Mosaic Law, without detouring through the scribes’ elaborate interpretations. Jesus’ radicalism was exactly the opposite of forgoing the Law. When Jesus retorted that God made the Sabbath for man, he meant: ‘God set the Jews free by taking them out of Egypt. The sabbatical year, like the Sabbath, must be put into practice. It was made to set people free, not to enslave them.’ That is why the prosbul, as well as all other regulations added to the Law to alter its liberating and revolutionary character, provoked Jesus’ indignation.” (Trocme 2007, 30).

3 See more about the house of prayer and synagogues in Nolland (1989, 194–202); Craddock (1990, 61–64); Evans (1990, 264–265); Sanders (1990, 77–81); Johnson (1991, 78); Bock (1994, 392).

That healing happened through Jesus' authoritative speech on the Sabbath day. Even though Jesus here performed deliverance and healing no one rebuked him for violation of the Sabbath prohibition 'not to work'. In this case Jesus' action was his authoritative speech and teaching actualised on the Sabbath day.⁴ Immediately, after that event on the same day, the Gospel of Luke speaks about another healing on the Sabbath day when Jesus healed Peter's mother in law (Lk 4:38–39). In a similar way, Jesus again healed the person with his authoritative verbal command.

After that Lk 5:17–6:11 shows the growing tension between Jesus and the religious leaders regarding the Sabbath day. In the story about the man with the withered hand, the religious authorities watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath day so that they might find an accusation against him (Lk 6:7). They wanted to accuse Jesus for his violation of the Sabbath day. Jesus knew their intention, thus he asked them a question "is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to destroy it?" (Lk 6:9). That question embodies Luke's presentation of Jesus' main purpose of keeping Sabbath. Thus, it is always appropriate and even on the Sabbath day to do good, omit to do evil and not fail to do good. In Luke Jesus' question, as mentioned earlier, implies also the confirmation of God's blessing of the Sabbath day.⁵

Furthermore, Lk 6:1–5 speaks about Jesus' disciples who plucked some ears of grain, rubbed them in their hands and ate them. Again, the religious leaders complained that this action is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day.⁶ It is interesting that Jesus' disciples just plucked some grain and rubbed them in their hands. Deut 23:25 says "If you go into your neighbour's standing grain, you may pluck the ears with your hand, but you shall not put a sickle to your neighbour's standing grain." Jesus' disciples did not use a sickle or some other tool to cut the grain.

4 See e.g. Sanders (1990, 6–23).

5 e.g. Gen 2:3; Exod 20:8–11; Deut 5:12–15.

6 "On the Sabbath there are two minor infringements: his disciples pick grain, he puts his hand on a sick woman to heal her (Luke 13.10–17). In both cases there is a legal defence: hunger overrides the law, and the Sabbath is made for people, not people for the Sabbath; everyone unties and leads animals to water on the Sabbath. Offering a defence shows respect for the law. Lawbreaking is *heinous* when it constitutes the denial that God was right to give the law and the assertion that one knows better. This is sinning with the full intent to sin: sinning 'with a high hand'. Justifying minor transgression on the grounds of a larger good, or arguing by legal analogy that an action is not an offence, is quite a different matter." (Sanders 1990, 90).

Ringe makes a conclusion that Deut 23:25 must be a right answer to the complaint whether that kind of action is lawful to do on the Sabbath day or not. She is not right saying that Luke did not want to quote Deut 23:25 in order to prove that the behaviour of Jesus' disciples was correct. Of course, it is obvious that Deut 23:24–25 speaks about the property laws. These laws make sure that the ownership of property does not override concern for those who are poor and needy. Those who are hungry may eat in a property but they are not allowed to take, sell and keep fruits or grain for their own use later. They can come back to eat the products in order to satisfy their appetite.

However, Luke mentioned Jesus' reply to the complaint of the religious leaders with the words written in 1Sam 21:1–6, when David and his followers were running for their lives. They were hungry and desperately in need of food. They eat the holy bread in the sanctuary. Each person who wanted to eat the holy bread must not be profane i.e. ritually impure.⁷ David said to the priest that he and his men did not have access to women, so in that case they were considered by the priest as ritually clean persons. It is obvious from the text that David and his men desperately needed to eat, thus, this story is more focused on their wellbeing. Luke decided to use Jesus' reply with the story about David and his followers eating the holy bread⁸ in the sanctuary underlining their hunger and desperate need for food because his disciples in Lk 6 were in need of food too. These two stories are connected with the issue of hunger.

It should be concluded that Lukan's presentation of Jesus' justification of his disciples' behaviour becomes a further aspect of proclamation of good news to the poor and hungry (Ringe 2005, 21–22). Luke concludes the pericope of Lk 6:1–5 with the words that the Son of Man is the Lord of the Sabbath day (Lk 6:5). He presents Jesus as the one who keeps the rules regarding the Sabbath day but in a new and redefined way. For that Jesus, the wholeness, integrity and dignity of human life must be seen as more important than the rules regarding the Sabbath day.

Furthermore, Lk 13:10–17 tells about another story regarding Jesus' teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath day. Jesus saw a sick disabled woman, called her, laid his hands on her and set her free from her sickness. That woman

7 About food, purity laws, Sabbath laws, see more in Sanders (1990).

8 "It was agreed that at an early point in the food chain purity must be observed so that holy food—not ordinary food—would not be contaminated. The disagreements probably show that, when the temple was destroyed, these rules were still developing. They were not so old that there was unanimity about how to keep the priests' food (and their own Passover and second tithe) pure." (Sanders 1990, 199).

was bent over and unable to stand up straight for eighteen years. Immediately when Jesus healed her, she stood up straight and began praising God. Again, the religious leaders accused Jesus for doing such a thing on the Sabbath day. Jesus replied “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath day?” (Lk 13:15–16).⁹

A similar story is following in Lk 14:1–6 at a Sabbath meal in the house of a leader of the Pharisees. In that occasion in front of Jesus there was a man who had dropsy. Jesus took him and healed him and sent him away. In both cases, a disabled woman and a man who had dropsy could be healed during the six weekdays and not on the Sabbath day. The reason why religious leaders accused Jesus for the violation of the prohibition of work on the Sabbath day was his healing of conditions that are not critical or life threatening. Luke presents Jesus who decided to heal especially the poor and sick on the Sabbath day, showing to the religious leaders and all others that healing, deliverance from sickness and any other yoke in order to preserve life is the most important thing for society. Wholeness and the protection of human life in Jesus’ public ministry are raised to the higher level showing the holiness of life in itself. It is very important to underline that for Luke Jesus’ actions of healing were performed for the poor and the needy. His actions had the socio-economic significance as well.¹⁰

According to Ringe, the poor people could not afford a visit to professional doctors or hospitals. The poor only had one opportunity for their healing and that was coming of a healer to their village or city to help them. Accordingly, “Jesus’ ‘work’ among those people—like other aspects of his ministry of ‘good news to the poor’, appears to have been central to his identity, and specifically to his interpretation of what it means to keep the Sabbath holy.” (Ringe 2005, 21). Luke’s presentation of Jesus’ ministry to the poor and the needy was more important than an opinion of the religious leaders regarding the rules of the Sabbath day. “... Sabbath is linked to good news to the poor and to the wholeness and integrity of life. In that sense the texts focused on the Sabbath day can attune us also to the Sabbath issues present (perhaps more subtly) in the Sabbath year and especially the “super-Sabbath” or Jubilee traditions that underline the Gospels’ witness to the ministry and teaching of Jesus ...” (Ringe 2005,

9 See e.g. Nolland (1989); Craddock (1990); Evans (1990).

10 See e.g. Esler (1987).

23). In this context (Lk 4:16–20) the Sabbath day represents a “little Jubilee” as a weekly celebration of the values articulated in Sabbatical and Jubilee release (Lowery 2000, 146). In this context the Sabbath day has a socio-economic category rather than a ritual one. “Jesus’ Sabbath activity links the honouring of the day to the larger agenda of Jubilee and Sabbath economics that is at the heart of the Gospels.” (Ringe 2005, 17).

That practices of socio-economic justice should be the spiritual discipline of the people (also Is 58:3, 6–8) because the Sabbath is a tradition of socio-economic justice. The practise of Sabbath keeping is an individual and communal spiritual discipline and practice. It is a practise of control within the context of economic sufficiency for all. Accordingly, the fullest expression of Sabbath meaning may be found in the legislation of Jubilee (Lev 25). The Jubilee intended to dismantle the formation of socio-economic inequality by releasing each community member from debt, returning lost land to its original owners, freeing slaves (Lev 25:13, 25–28, 35–42, 47–55).

Myers describes ‘Sabbath economics’ as the basic struggle of mammon vs. manna. The economy of ‘manna’ refers to the story from Exod 16.¹¹ Gathering of manna was instructed in order to meet the needs of all people underlining God’s provision of sufficiency for everybody. Contrarily the ‘model of mammon’ economics is the one of excess accumulation for some and poverty and deprivation for others. It is important to observe a Sabbath discipline based on the model of ‘Sabbath economics of manna.’ ‘Sabbath economic of manna’ refers to God’s provisional grace and to a communal ethic of redistribution.¹² It is against a system in which progression is based on individual cruel and selfish ability to exploit others. It goes against an achievement of wealth concentration in the hands of a few people.¹³ Trocmé rightly pointed out that Luke’s gospel is organised around Isaiah’s proclamation of ‘good news to the poor’. Only through the Jubilee actions such as cancellation of debts, freedom of slaves and restoration of land may ‘good news’ be revealed to the poor.¹⁴

11 See more in Myers (2001).

12 See e.g. Johnson (1981); Hays (2010).

13 About manna and Sabbath as a literary-theological reading of Exodus 16 see Geller (2005).

14 See Trocmé (2007). Also, a gracious God sustains the universe, so his people should rely on the grace of God. To observe Sabbath means to be open for that grace. The main goal of mastering the practice of Sabbath observing is “to know the grace of God in Christ, through grateful acceptance of a gracious practice that has been borne by a living tradition to a culture that sorely needs it. Yet even in accepting it, contemporary Christians will experience as well the truth of Augustine’s ancient testimony to God: ‘... our hearts are restless until they rest in you.’” (Bass 2005, 37).

The purpose of the practise of Sabbath keeping to shape and transform challenges the socio-economic situation on both the social and the personal levels.

1.1 *Conclusion Regarding the Sabbath Day in the Gospel of Luke*

The Sabbath passages in the Gospel of Luke describe Jesus' piety as completely different than the piety of the Jewish leadership (Lk 4:16–30; 4:31–37; 6:1–5, 6–11; 13:10–17; 14:1–6). In the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, Jesus healed the possessed man and Peter's mother in law with his authoritative speech on the Sabbath day (Lk 4:31–39). On those occasions no one accused Jesus of the violation of the Sabbath day. However, after these happenings the religious leaders wanted to attack and accuse Jesus for the violation of the Sabbath day (Lk 5:17–6:11). Jesus answered their provocation with the question that embodies his main purpose for observing the Sabbath day "is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to destroy it?" (Lk 6:9). Furthermore, Jesus protected his disciples when they ate grains on the Sabbath day, saying to his opponents that they were in need of food. Justification of the disciples' behaviour becomes one of the aspects of his proclamation of good news to the poor and hungry.

After that occasion, Jesus healed a sick disabled woman and a man with dropsy on the Sabbath day (Lk 13:10–17; 14:1–6). For Luke, Jesus was aware of the religious leaders who wanted to attack and accuse him for what he was doing on the Sabbath day, Jesus decided to heal publicly the poor and sick, showing that dignity, wholeness, wellbeing of human life are more important than the regulations for keeping the Sabbath day. Jesus publicly helped the poor and the needy persons on the Sabbath day, expressing the socio-economic significance of his actions.

The Gospel of Luke sees Jesus' proclamation and action of 'good news to the poor' as a central for Jesus' identity and for his understanding of the meaning of the Sabbath day. Jesus' ministry is focused on the poor and marginalised people who need good news. In the Gospel of Luke, especially in Lk 4:16–20, the Sabbath day is presented as a 'little Jubilee'. In this context the main purpose of the Sabbath day is an individual and communal discipline and practise of socio-economic justice and equality. Observance of the Sabbath day according to Jesus' teaching in Luke needs to be understood and accepted as a rule based on the model of 'Sabbath economics of manna', which embodies God's provision and communal practise of redistribution of goods. The proper keeping of the Sabbath day means transformation and reshaping of socio-economic situation on personal and communal levels.

2 The Idea of Jubilee in the Gospel of Luke

The characteristics of socio-economic justice can be found in the Gospel of Luke, especially in the parts that describe the themes of Sabbath and Jubilee.¹⁵ The themes of Sabbath/Jubilee and their theological meanings can be discovered in the Gospel of Luke with the help of the narrative-literary approach and rhetorical-structural analysis. After the exegetical interpretation of the Lukan concept of the Sabbath day, we are going to discuss the idea of Jubilee in the Gospel of Luke.

Luke presents Jesus who reveals himself in his earthly ministry as the one who brings salvation that involves in itself the kingdom of God. The main goal of Jesus' mission is to offer the kingdom of God and he describes that kingdom as release, freedom and healing in the context of the message of Jubilee (Lk 4:16–21; also Lev 25:10; Is 61:1–2). Jesus proclaimed the kingdom of God¹⁶ as something both present and future. It is 'already and not yet' present. It was already present and inaugurated in Jesus' public ministry but it was not yet completely present and consummated. God's kingdom is near and contains earthly hope regarding heavenly things. God's kingdom is where God reigns in his authority and power. Furthermore, Luke's presentation of the kingdom of God includes an invitation to ethical living as a consequence of experienced blessing (Lk 6:20–49). Through commitment to God, the community of faithful is accountable to God as well. The transformation of the community needs to be shown in their new community of the faithful. The ethics of the faithful does have social repercussions as well (Bock 1994, 33, 37).

The feature of Jubilee in Lk 4:16–21 is important for understanding Jesus because he is the one in whom the prophecy is fulfilled especially when he says 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing'. His usage of the word *σήμερον* 'today' may reflect the nearness of salvation. The liberation and the year of God's favour were inaugurated in the historical occasion of Jesus' public ministry. Jesus' listeners were responsible for their own reaction regarding his message (Prior 1995, 157).

The eschatological time of God's kingdom and salvation has begun but it still continues. The importance of the message of Jubilee is still present through its message of that salvation. It should be understood that the message of the Jubilee and Sabbath year has been presented by the Gospel of Luke as

15 Kinsler underline that the themes of Sabbath and Jubilee are essential to the overall biblical message. See Kinsler and Kinsler (1999).

16 See e.g. Moxnes (1988).

an eschatological notion of God's kingdom and his salvation that has come through the messianic public ministry of Jesus Christ. Also, the socio-economic situation of the oppressed has been changed throughout the coming of God's kingdom and Jesus Christ himself.

The future eschatological time will bring release to all those who suffer, especially those who have suffered because of socio-economic oppression. Freedom from debt and slavery, the Sabbath rest of the land, and forgiveness of sins have been the crucial themes of the legislation of Jubilee and Sabbath. They shall be proclaimed and lived out by the true followers of Jesus (Sloan 1977, 175–177). Contrarily to Sloan, Turner negates prevalence of 'a Lucan Jubilee theology' in the Gospel as a whole. "It would be hazardous on the basis of this evidence even to begin to speak of a Lucan jubilee theology—far more so to make this a central motif in Luke's soteriology, as Sloan does, for Luke nowhere uses the distinctively jubilee vocabulary (ἐνιαυτὸς ἀφέσεως σημασία; Lev 25:10 ff.), and nowhere else develops unambiguously jubilee concepts. Nevertheless Strobel is probably right to suggest that for his programmatic speech of Jesus Luke chose to use a source derived from a community amongst whom jubilee hopes were important." (Turner 1981, 21).

The image of Jubilee in Jewish literature¹⁷ is closely connected with God and his eschatological salvation. Sloan interprets that the Jubilee has eschatological meaning in the Gospel of Luke. It is reflected in two-stage eschatology, present and future eschatology.¹⁸ The Day of Atonement, which is a day for repentance

17 E.g. the book of Daniel, the book of Isaiah, the Book of Jubilees, Qumran, Talmudic literature.

18 Conzelmann underlines that the theology of the Gospel of Luke is a history of salvation (*Heilsgeschichte*) inspired by the postponement of the *parousia* and the gone eschatological expectation. The major task for the writer of the Gospel of Luke was to renew hope for the eschatological reality in everyday life. In order to underline Jesus' ministry as a period of world history, Conzelmann brings several important topics. First of them is the close relationship of Jesus and the Jewish people to the message of the Old Testament. Luke speaks about the time of Israel. That time existed from the establishment or election of God's people until the end of ministry of John the Baptist. Additionally, he speaks about the close relationship between Judaism and the early church and the position of that church within world history. Conzelmann speaks about the plan and the work of God, which are framed by the creation at one point and the *parousia* at the other. He has found three time periods, such as the period of the Israelites, the time of Jesus Christ on the earth and the time of the church until the *parousia* (Conzelmann 1961, 149–150). Christian history has modified from the future to the past while the present time has a positive impact. In Conzelmann's interpretation of three periods of world history, the time and the theme of *parousia* are only described in the future perspective in the Gospel of Luke.

and forgiveness, prepares the people for the Jubilee that has also eschatological meaning in the Gospel of Luke. Sloan has found the evidence of eschatology in Lukan passages such 4:16–30; 6:20–38 and 11:4 (Sloan 1977, 160–162).

However, Jesus in his person and public ministry has brought the beginning of the new time for all those who encounter God's reign. The new time will abolish the old order of oppressive and exploitative structures (Volschenk and Aarde 2002, 815). Jesus as a sovereign God takes care of the poor and debt slaves. He is involved in the life of his creation in the present time. He will show his reign in an eschatological time as well. God's reign and sovereignty affect the socio-economic situation of the faithful community only when that community accept and embody his sovereignty (Ringe 1985, 32). Jubilee images exist in a variety of forms within the sources. "These images form the core sayings in several pronouncement stories and are found in parables, in the Lord's Prayer, and in several teaching passages. They also figure in accounts of Jesus' table community with outcasts and sinners." (Ringe 1985, 88).

2.1 *Theo-political Implications of the Jubilee in the Gospel of Luke*

The legislation of the Jubilee or Sabbatical year in the Old Testament includes four requirements: redistribution of wealth, the cancellation of debts, the rest of the land and the release of slaves and hired workers. The Jubilee message is a combination of features in the Gospel of Luke even though there is no direct indication of it (Volschenk and Aarde 2002, 816). For Luke, Jesus has announced the coming of God's kingdom that will abolish all forms of slavery in human life. In order to confirm that Jesus proclaimed a Jubilee in the Nazareth synagogue in Lk 4 we need to read some other Lukan texts as well.

2.1.1 Redistribution of Wealth

Some scholars underline that Jesus referred to the agrarian economy of the first century Palestine in his Jubilee message.¹⁹ That kind of agrarian economy has derived from Jesus' vision of the coming of God's kingdom. One of the main aims of Jesus' public ministry was to overcome and solve the problems of unequal economical distribution of wealth²⁰ and debt slavery in first century Palestine. Trocmé underlines that many of Jesus' other teachings would fall easily into place when they would be interpreted in light of the Jubilee because Jesus proclaimed the inauguration of the Jubilee closely connected with the

19 See e.g. Hollenbach (1985); Ringe (1985); Oakman (1986).

20 See e.g. Hays (2010).

salvation of his people. In the first century in Palestine, the main capital of the people was land and livestock (Troc   2007, 34–35).

It was a difficult time for the peasants who could very easily lose their land, probably because of high taxes or bad agricultural year. That time was characterised by high taxation when only the rich people were able to purchase the land. Most peasants became very poor because of their lost land and a few rich landowners became richer by the increase of their property. In that kind of situation, the peasants were not able to pay their debts. Debts and the lost land were the main reason for the enslavement of those poor peasants. Those poor peasants were in the position of debt slaves and they were under pressure because of exploitation of the landlords (Volschenk and Aarde 2002, 828–829, 836).

“Whatever may have been the precise implications of either Isaiah or Jesus in alluding to the Jubilee *d  ror*, it would seem that to most commentators on the Levitical Jubilee its relevance to our own day must consist chiefly in a more equal redistribution of property, by ‘cancelation of debts.’” (North 2000, 118). In that way debt slavery, exploitation of the poor by the greedy rich people and concentration of the world’s wealth in the possession of a few rich people will be cancelled.²¹

2.1.2 The Cancellation of Debts

According to Lev 25, the Jubilee legislation brings a periodic cancellation of debts and recovery of one’s property and family every fifty years. The main focus of the legislation of Jubilee is the socio-economic area based on the Lord’s revelation. The Lukan interpretation of the message of Jubilee represents the widened scope of the Torah tradition. Socio-economic issues are accompanied by other issues that relate to individuals and societies. Jesus’ Jubilee message is concerned about its socio-economic part but also about the spiritual part.

That’s why the prayer he taught to his disciples includes the forgiveness of debts/trespasses in a language which is the same as the one of the remittance year (Luke 11:4). It is not only financial—all debts are taken away. All that hinders reconciled relations with God has been put aside:

21 Myers has found the solution for this problem. The first thing is concerned about the abundant world created by God. That world provides enough for everyone. The next point says that lack of resources is the result of human greed and exploitation. Thus, wealth needs to be redistributed equally within the community of the faithful. He speaks about the prophetic calling to a regular practice of wealth redistribution, which describes in itself what ‘good news’ to the poor means (Kinsler and Kinsler 1999, ix).

relations are healed between God and all of humanity. The ancient Jubilee year was linked to the day of forgiveness. That now has been generalized. All human and social relations now have a new quality.

MATTHEY 2000, 7

This requirement is very important in Jesus' teaching. The Lord's Prayer in Matt 6:12 καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν is translated 'forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors'.²² The Greek word ὀφείλημα means 'debt'. Literally, it is 'owed debt, sum owed, due obligation'. However, in a moral or religious sense this word can mean guilt, sin or offence. Lk 11:4 says καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν, καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἀφίομεν παντὶ ὀφείλοντι ἡμῖν i.e. 'forgive us our sins for we forgive everyone who is indebted to us'.²³ The Greek word in Lk 11:4 is ἁμαρτία, which means 'sin, a departure from doing what is right, wrongdoing, sinful deed, guilt, sinfulness' (Friberg 2006, 1288 ἁμαρτία, 20147 ὀφείλημα). It is obvious that the Greek word ὀφείλημα in Matt 6:12 in a moral sense may refer to sin as a debt. Lk 11:4 uses a very specific word that describes sin, i.e. sinful actions. "... Matthew refers to Jesus' mandate to forgive 'trespasses' or 'sins'. Luke includes forgiveness of both 'sins' and 'debts' in his version of the Lord's Prayer (11:2–4)." (Kinsler and Kinsler 1999, 101).

Also Ringe has found at the same time both sins and debts in the petition of the Lord's Prayer²⁴ (Ringe 1985, 77–80). Jesus teaches men to forgive sins, which in itself must include forgiveness and cancellation of the debts of those who owe money. This kind of forgiveness means to practice the Jubilee legislation because forgiveness is associated with remission of debts as well. All those who suffer because of financial debt and low income not sufficient for living may be forgiven and free from the bondage.²⁵ God's kingdom brings within itself forgiveness and liberation.

22 E.g. NIV, NRSV, KJV, ESV.

23 E.g. ASV, NIB, NRS, NRSV, KJV, NKJ, ESV.

24 About the Lord's Prayer in Matt 6:12–15 and Lk 11:2–4 see e.g. Sloan (1977, 139–145).

25 "The jubilean practice of forgiving debts had one very serious drawback, which is addressed in Deuteronomy 15:7–11. A too frequent occurrence of the remittance of debts tended to freeze credit. As the sabbatical year approached the rich were increasingly hesitant to loan money to the poor for fear of losing their capital. This stinginess paralysed the economy and hindered their profits ... The solution was called the *prosbul*. *Prosbul* probably comes from the Greek *pros boule* (a deed carried out before a law court). According to the *Gittin* tractate of the Mishnah (iv, 3), Hillel gave the creditor permission to use a court as his attorney in recovering a debt that the sabbatical year had abolished. By means of this

So, this petition is closely connected with the Old Testament legislation of the year of Jubilee and the year of release (Bock 1994, 405–413). As it was concluded in the beginning of this chapter the Gospel of Luke has an interest in socio-economic legislation of the Jubilee and Sabbath year. The Lukan Lord's Prayer intends to refer also to financial and material debts. "Because the acceptable year of the Lord is here, because the jubiliary mercies of God now extend to the generation of the Endtime, the disciples too must practice a jubiliary mercy toward their fellow men that extends even to the forgiveness of financial debts, just as God their heavenly Father has forgiven their moral debts to him." (Sloan 1977, 144–145).

Trocmé underlines that Lk 4:16–21 speaks about the proclamation of the historical Jubilee year. On the Day of Atonement, Tishri 10 (i.e. September or October 26), 26–27 AD, was a Sabbatical/Jubilee year. In that year Jesus proclaimed the absolute restoration of the Jubilee legislation and its practices.

Thus, the Lord's Prayer is truly jubilean. In this context, Jesus' listeners understood it to mean: "The time has come for God's people to cancel all the debts that bind the poor because their debts to God have also been cancelled." Jesus was setting up a rigorous equation between practicing the Jubilee and the grace of God. Although he was not otherwise a legalist and unhesitatingly forgave even prostitutes and people of ill repute, Jesus was very strict on this one point: only he who grants forgiveness can be forgiven. God's *aphesis* toward you is in vain if you do not practice *aphesis* toward others.

TROCMÉ 2007, 28

According to Baker, Lk 4:16–21 does not mean only an announcement of the concrete Jubilee reforms or spiritual teaching about the forgiveness of sins that would be actualised during Jesus' public ministry, even though these verses speak about some rules for the Sabbatical and Jubilee years²⁶ (e.g. the

subterfuge, loans with interest, which had been abolished by the Mosaic Law (Exod. 22:25) and limited in duration by the provisions of the sabbatical year, once again became possible. The rich, and particularly the Pharisees, whom Jesus accused of 'devouring widows' houses,' used this measure to its fullest." (Trocmé 2007, 29–30).

26 For Bock the phrase *κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν* (to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord) is closely connected with the theme of Jubilee. "Because of the comprehensive character of the deliverance that Isaiah described, Jubilee was interpreted in Judaism as a reference to the dawn of God's new age. The citation in Luke, then, is not a call to fulfil

remission of debts Lk 6:35; 7:41–42). However, the most important thing is that the complete realisation of this prophecy will happen in the *parousia*, i.e. in Jesus' second coming (Baker 1998, 54).

2.1.3 Resting of Land and Release of Slaves

Even though Jesus did not mention this requirement that the land needs to rest in the Gospel of Luke, it is most likely that every seventh year the Jews already had put that provision into practise. In Luke Jesus has encouraged his listeners to seek first for God's kingdom and all other things important for living will be given to them. In other words, Jesus confirms the Jubilee rules that God will provide for the needs of his people when they obey his commandments. The land needs to have rest in order to be a source of blessing (also Lev 25:20–21).

The idea of rest is closely connected with Sabbath (Gen 2:1–3; Exod 16:22–30; 20:8–11; 23:12; 31:17) and the Sabbatical and Jubilee year (Exod 23:10–11; Lev 25:2–5, 11; 26:34–35). However, the idea of rest on the Sabbatical and Jubilee year refers more to the resting of the land. The produce of the land needs to be treated as a providence and gift from God. The whole environment should not be exploited by human beings. Rather, it should be respected as God's property because he has created natural resources and has established their treatment. Baker underlines here the importance of a theological ecology that is aiming to keep the world in a better condition for the future generations (Baker 1998, 55–57).

One of the main reasons for the Jubilee legislation was prevention of the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few rich people. The image of the Jubilee year in Is 61 is connected with the celebration of the Lord's reign and a new partaking in the righteousness and peace of the Lord. The anointed one in Is 61 leads the inaugural celebration of the Lord's reign throughout the year of Jubilee. The words of Jubilee liberty were of incredible comfort and release in the postexilic time and during the first century in Palestine (Ringe 1995, 68–69). The poor and needy desperately needed that kind of message of freedom in the time of Jesus' public ministry and during the postexilic time when people needed to reshape their identity as the Lord's people and to establish a just socio-economic society of the faithful community.

literarily the legal requirement of Jubilee. Rather, the passage takes that picture of freedom to show what God is doing spiritually and physically through his commissioned agent, Jesus. Jubilee, by analogy, becomes a picture of total forgiveness and salvation, just as it was in its prophetic usage in Isa. 61." (Bock 1994, 410).

Is 61 takes the image of the Jubilee year described in Lev 25. A year of Jubilee every fifty years brings a liberty, release and rest. Like the Sabbatical year celebrated every seven years (Exod. 21:2–6; 23:10–11; Deut 15:1–18), the Jubilee legislation declares that the land needs to have a year of rest, debts should be abolished, debt slaves need to be set free and the sold ancestral land needs to be returned to the original owners.

In the Gospel of Luke, the main recipients of the announced, evangelised or preached good news are πτωχοί i.e. poor and needy (Sloan 1977, 115). According to verbal similarities and the similar socio-economic situation of the oppressed, Sloan has found the strong influence of Is 61:1 ff. in the Beatitudes in Luke 6:20–26 as well.²⁷ Also, the year of Jubilee proclaimed in Is 61 and Lk 4 brings the same promise of reversal in the coming of God's kingdom. The legal concept of the Jubilee in Lev 25 and the prophetic vision of that year in Is 61:1 ff. are eschatologically presented in the Lukan Beatitudes. The socio-economic situation will be restored and all kinds of oppression and exploitation will be abolished. The verbal similarities of the Beatitudes in Luke and Is 61:1 ff. can be found in the presentation of their socio-economic situations and presentation of the vision of the Jubilee year (e.g. Is 61:1 ff.; Lk 6:20 ff.). Furthermore, Sloan has found the expression of the Jubilee idea in the service of eschatological announcement in some other Lukan texts as well, such as Lk 4:16–21; 6:20–26; 7:22; 14:7–24. That eschatological proclamation includes in itself the announcement of God's salvation (Sloan 1977, 125–128, 168).

The legislation of the Jubilee and Sabbath year contains the rule regarding interest free loans, especially the poor and needy shall have the right to get loans without interest (e.g. Lev 25:35–38; Deut 15:7–11; Lk 6:34 ff.). It is important to lend especially to those who are not able to return. "It is furthermore the case that the poor are exactly those for whom the announcement in Lk 4:18–19, par. Is 61:1–2a; 58:6, of the 'acceptable year of the Lord' is *joyous* precisely *because* it is the announcement of the jubiliary reversal of their socially oppressed condition: the proclamation of the final Jubilee year of God." (Sloan 1977, 115).

Through these Old Testament requirements found directly or indirectly in the Gospel of Luke, we may conclude that Jesus Christ in his inauguration of his public ministry uses these old Jubilee traditional requirements. He reshapes and adds something new to them. For example, no limitation of time in the period of fifty years exists any more with the coming of Jesus and his Jubilee

27 See also Bock (1994, 408–409).

message. In Luke, for Jesus every moment of human life should be Jubilee.²⁸ Freedom principles should mark the activities and relations of all Jesus' followers because "the Nazareth proclamation proclaims a permanent year of favour" (Matthey 2000, 7). Furthermore, Ross and Gloria Kinsler underline an importance for the determined commitment to seek dignity and fullness of life for all God's people in order to celebrate the Sabbath-Jubilee mandate (Kinsler and Kinsler 1999, 159).

3 The Announcement of Jesus' Public Ministry in Lk 4:16–21

- 16 Καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς Ναζαρά, οὗ ἦν τεθραμμένος, καὶ εἰσῆλθεν κατὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς αὐτῷ ἐν
τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν καὶ ἀνέστη ἀναγνῶναι.
17 καὶ ἐπεδόθη αὐτῷ βιβλίον τοῦ προφήτου Ἡσαΐου καὶ ἀναπτύξας τὸ βιβλίον
εὗρεν τὸν τόπον οὗ ἦν γεγραμμένον,
18 Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' ἐμέ οὗ εἶνεκεν ἔχρισέν με εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς, ἀπέ-
σταλκέν με, κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν, ἀποστεῖλαι
τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει,
19 κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν.
20 καὶ πτύξας τὸ βιβλίον ἀποδοὺς τῷ ὑπηρέτῃ ἐκάθισεν· καὶ πάντων οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ
ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ ἦσαν ἀτενίζοντες αὐτῷ.
21 ἤρξατο δὲ λέγειν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὅτι Σήμερον πεπλήρωται ἡ γραφὴ αὕτη ἐν τοῖς
ὥσιν ὑμῶν.

- 16 When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the
synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read,
17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the
scroll and found the place where it was written:
18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,

28 Kiuchi has found the practical wisdom of the year of Jubilee in the New Testament: the New Testament contains the warnings against the love of money and wealth; it encourages cheerful giving to others; being sojourners and strangers with the Lord in this world; believers should assist and help each other; believers are saved by grace and therefore possess nothing in this world (Kiuchi 2007, 468–469).

- 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." *κ_{JV} 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* *NAS 19 To proclaim the favourable year of the Lord.*
- 20 And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.
- 21 Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

The beginning of Jesus' public ministry started according to Luke with his preaching at the synagogue in Nazareth²⁹ (Lk 4:16–21). After Jesus' baptism and a temptation time in the wilderness, he came back to Galilee to begin his public ministry (Lk 4:14–15). Jesus attended the Sabbath worship in the synagogue in Nazareth. He stood up in the front of the congregation to read the book of Isaiah that was given to him. So, Jesus communicated the text to the congregation in the synagogue. Through that, in the Gospel of Luke, Jesus reveals himself as an expositor, interpreter and teacher of Scripture.³⁰ The Gospel of Luke³¹ is the only one of the four gospels that records Jesus' quotation and interpretation of the Isaiah text mentioned here.³² Here is the synopsis of the LXX and MT's versions³³ of Is 58:6; 61:1–2 and Lk 4:18–19:

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- 29 About the significant recent studies on the Nazareth pericope see Koet (1989, 24–25); Schreck (1989, 399–403).
- 30 See e.g. Falcetta (2003).
- 31 The date of the Gospel's writing is uncertain. The most popular date is 80–90, after the fall of Jerusalem. About the date and the place of writing the Gospel of Luke see e.g. Bock (1994, 16–20).
- 32 "... the nature of Jesus' mission is explained through reference to Isaiah's description of a Spirit-anointed, messianic figure who preaches good news to the poor, and announces release for the oppressed and recovery of sight for the blind (Lk 4:18–19; 6:20–26; 7:20–22; Acts 10:38; cf. Is 61:1–2). Luke also highlights that Jesus' mission will involve rejection, death and exaltation, which reflects the pattern of Isaiah 53 (Lk. 22:37; Acts 3:13; 8:32–33). In each case, the events surrounding Jesus control the selection and interpretation of Scripture." (Mallen 2008, 195–196).
- 33 About the interpretation of Lk 4:16–30 with the forms represented in the LXX and MT see Moore (1995, 81–100).

LXX Isaiah 61:1–2; 58:6	MT Isaiah 61:1–2; 58:6	LXX Luke 4:18–19
Isaiah 61:1 πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' ἐμέ οὗ εἶνεκεν ἔχρισέν με εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς ἀπέσταλκέν με ἰάσασθαι τοὺς συντετριμμένους τῇ καρδίᾳ κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεςιν καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν	Isaiah 61:1 אֲדֹנָי יְהוֹה עָלַי יָעַן מִשַׁח יְהוֹה אֵתִי לְבַשֵּׁר עֲנָוִים שְׁלַחֲנִי לְהַבְשִׁי לְנַשְׁבְּרֵי לֵב לְקַרְא לְשִׁבּוּיָם דְּיֹזֵר וְלְאַסּוּרִים פְּקוּח־קוֹחַ:	Luke 4:18 πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' ἐμέ οὗ εἶνεκεν ἔχρισέν με εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς, ἀπέσταλκέν με, κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεςιν καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν, ἀποστείλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἄφέσει,
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken in heart, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind;	The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed (<i>poor</i>), to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners.	The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind,
Isaiah 58:6 οὐχὶ τοιαύτην νηστείαν ἐγὼ ἐξελεξάμην λέγει κύριος ἀλλὰ λύε πάντα σύνδεσμον ἀδικίας διάλυε στραγγαλιὰς βιαίων συναλλαγμάτων ἀπόστελλε τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἄφέσει καὶ πάσαν συγγραφήν ἄδικον διάσπα	Isaiah 58:6 הֲלוֹא זֶה צוֹם אֲבָהֶרָהוּ פִּתְיָה תִּרְצְבוֹת לַשֵּׁע הַתֵּר אֲגָדוֹת מוֹטָה וְשִׁלַּח רְצוּצִים הַפְּשִׁים וְכָל-מוֹטָה תִּתְּנָקוּ:	to let the oppressed go free, <i>or</i> to set at liberty those who are oppressed (see Isaiah 58:6)
Isaiah 58:6 I have not chosen such a fast, says the Lord; but do you loose every burden of iniquity, do you untie the knots of hard bargains, set the bruised free, and cancel every unjust account?	Isaiah 58:6 Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?	

(cont.)

LXX	MT	LXX
Isaiah 61:1–2; 58:6	Isaiah 61:1–2; 58:6	Luke 4:18–19
Isaiah 61:2 καλέσαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν καὶ ἡμέραν ἀνταποδόσεως παρακαλέσαι πάντας τοὺς πενθοῦντας	Isaiah 61:2 לְקַרֵּא שְׁנַת־רִצּוֹן לַיהוָה וַיּוֹם נָקָם לְאַלְהֵינוּ לְנַחֵם כָּל־אֲבֵלִים:	Luke 4:19 κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν.
to declare the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of recompense; to comfort all that mourn	to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;	to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour

Lk 4:16–21³⁴ records only two verses of Is 61, and one from Is 58. The announcement of the beginning of Jesus' public ministry in the synagogue³⁵ follows the account of Jesus time in the wilderness. For Luke, Jesus' temptation in the wilderness confirmed that Jesus was completely obedient and ready to fulfil God's will in regard to his ministry. Jesus 'was led by the Spirit' into the wilderness (Matt 4:1; Mk 1:12; Lk 4:14). 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me' reminds the reader of Luke 3:22, 4:14.³⁶ A few sentences later in Lk 4:18, the Gospel of Luke describes Jesus in the Nazareth synagogue using Is 58 and 61 in order to define his public ministry (Fitzmyer 1981, 530–534).

34 About the structure see e.g. Nolland (1989, 190–203).

35 The early synagogue was a place of prayer, a judicial tribunal, an advisory centre, a place of instruction, a place of gathering for various purposes. It is most likely that the services in synagogues were informal including prayers, alms for the poor and needy, reading and teaching of the Scriptures. See e.g. Craddock (1990, 61); Prior (1995, 110). "Led by laity, the Pharisees being the most prominent among them, the synagogue became the institutional centre of a religion of the Book, not of the altar, and in time became and remains today the dominant form of Judaism. While there was only one temple, synagogues arose everywhere, wherever ten adult males wished so to constitute themselves. The synagogue was not only an assembly for worship but also a school, a community centre and a place for administering justice." (Craddock 1990, 62). Also, about a first century synagogue service see e.g. Vinson (2008, 116–119).

36 See e.g. Bovon (2002, 151).

The description of the descent of the Spirit at Jesus' baptism and the narratives regarding the anointment of Spirit described in Lk 4:18 and Is 61:1 are closely connected (Strauss 1995, 202). The anointed one who has been sent (Is 61) is associated with Jesus and his anointing at his baptism (e.g. Lk 3:21–22; Acts 10:36). Jesus has been anointed by the Spirit to fulfil the promise or task described in Is 61:1–2. The quotation of Is 58:6 and 61:1 ff. in Luke 4:18 ff. provides an interpretation of Jesus' ministry, i.e. Jesus uses these words in order to underline that his mission is commissioned by God (Tannehil 1996, 91–93). The proclamation of Jesus' public ministry (Lk 4:16–30)³⁷ and his healing ministry in Capernaum (4:31–43) characterise the beginning of the fulfilment of Is 61:1–2 (Strauss 1995, 218).

We are not sure whether Jesus asked for the book of Isaiah or he followed a lectionary reading that demanded reading from the scroll of Isaiah.³⁸ Even though some scholars have argued that Jesus was following a lectionary reading³⁹ prescribed for the specific festivals and Sabbaths, there is no concrete evidence that such order of readings existed in the first century (Nolland 1989, 194). Bock underlines that Jesus wanted to read from the prophets and found

37 "Mark's story of rejection at Nazareth has been renovated into Luke's story of success *despite* rejection. Moreover, Luke's treatment of the 'rejection' of Israel is not so far afield from the Pauline argument of the question. In viewing the rejection story under this light, 'it is not as though the word of God had failed' (Romans 9,6) at Nazareth. On the contrary, 'a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles come in, and so all Israel will be saved' (11,25–26). In this great, programmatic Lukan reversal, present rejection anticipates ultimate success." (Schreck 1989, 455–456).

38 Some authors see here a Haftarah reading in the background, which is a series of selections from the Hebrew Bible (Tanach) that is publicly read in synagogue. However, there is no clear evidence about the origins of reading the Haftarah. E.g. Bock suggests "... three possibilities exist for seeing a Haftarah reading in the background.

- 1) If the reading cycle was not fixed in the first century beyond a Torah reading and a Prophets reading and Jesus chose his text, as Luke 4:17 implies, then a Haftarah reading of Isa. 61 is possible, with Jesus adding commentary from Is 58
- 2) If Jesus simply gives the commentary after the Torah and Prophets readings and reads a text to set the context of his remarks, then the mixed oral citation becomes even more explainable without having to posit here a summary citation from Luke or his source.
- 3) Finally, if Jesus is using only Is 61, then the line about freeing the oppressed might reflect a targumic form. Although the event's details are not certain because we lack information on first-century worship practices, it is clear that Jesus presented himself as the fulfilment of Is 61." (Bock 1994, 411).

39 Some authors discuss how the Gospel of Luke is used in the lectionaries, focusing especially on the Nazareth story. See e.g. Schreck (1989, 454); Evans (1990, 268); Bovon (2002, 153).

the place in the text of Isaiah. According to him, Jesus deliberately chose the text of the prophet Isaiah (Bock 1994, 404).

However, there is no clear evidence to make that statement. It is obvious that the Gospel of Luke says nothing about whether we should understand Jesus as reading the prophet Isaiah that had been ordered to him to read or if we should see this as Jesus selecting the scripture deliberately himself. Ringe concludes that “Luke may have been using a version of Isaiah that already combined those verses (since there were a number of variations in the texts of biblical manuscripts, especially during the centuries before the advent of modern printing techniques), or he may have been quoting from memory and been guided by the common content to include ‘to let the oppressed go free’ with the other lines from Isaiah 61:1–2.” (Ringe 1995, 68).

It is most likely that the writer of the text of Luke reshaped the message according to his concerns or that Luke records Jesus’ words because Jesus himself was the editor of the text confirming the past and announcing something completely new that God is starting to do through him and his Spirit (Bailey 2008, 156–157). Furthermore, it can be that Luke is quoting from memory. It is obvious that Is 58:6; 61:1–2a and Luke 4:18–19 are texts combined on purpose.

... Luke is responsible for combining Is 61:1–2a with a line from Is 58:6 in a manner closely in keeping with a rabbinic hermeneutic rule of scriptural explanation. Luke’s “midrashic technique” resembles the later rabbinic hermeneutical rule, the *gezerah shavah*, a method for establishing analogies between two Torah precepts whose phrasing have at least one word in common and whose contents may be comparable. In Is 61:1–2a and Is 58:6 poverty is a theme. Between those texts ἀφεσις is used as a “bridge-word”.

KOET 1989, 142

Jesus read the first two verses of Is 61 but Luke’s Gospel makes some editing to that text.⁴⁰ For Bailey, four marks indicate these editing and changes in the Lukan text. The phrase ‘to bind up the broken hearted’ is used in both texts

40 “One of the keys to understanding the guiding principle behind the editing is to note an important Dead Sea Scroll fragment. This scrap of pre-Christian papyrus (4Q521) describes the coming Messiah as one who will ‘preach good news to the poor’ and provide ‘release for the captives’. He will also ‘open the eyes of the blind’ and ‘raise up the downtrodden’. A second fragment from the same cave (4Q278) mentions that the ‘Holy Spirit rests on his Messiah’. The text that Jesus chose to read is clearly in tune with what the Jewish counterculture visionaries of his day expected from the Messiah.” (Bailey 2008, 149).

of the LXX and MT but it is not used by Luke. The second editing in Lk 4:18 is coming from Is 58:6 'to set at liberty those who are oppressed'.

Bailey's adds that the word 'to call' from Is 61 is upgraded into a word that means 'to proclaim', i.e. he mentions without any clarification that the meaning of the word 'to call' is reshaped into 'to proclaim' in Lk 4.⁴¹ The word used in Is 61, in the LXX (καλέω) and MT (קָרָא), means to call. Also, this word is used, for example, when God or Christ *calls* to eternal salvation (Mk 2:17; 1 Cor 1:9; Gal 5:8, 13; Eph 4:1; 1 Tim 6:12; Heb 9:15; 1 Pt 5:10). Luke's usage of the Greek word κηρύσσω means to proclaim aloud, to announce, to preach⁴² most often in reference to God's saving action⁴³ (Gingrich and Danker 1983, 108 κηρύσσω, 3357 καλέω). Accordingly, we may say that the message in Lk 4:19 has almost the same meaning as in Is 61:2 regarding proclamation, preaching or calling. Furthermore, the last mark that mirrors some changes of the Lukan text, can be recognised in his shorter version of the same message described in Is 58:6 and 61:1–2.

Additionally, we may find some other changes or editing in Lk 4:18–19. For example, Luke is following the LXX regarding the idea of 'recovery of sight to the blind', which is missing in the MT.⁴⁴ Archer and Chirichigno interpret that in a way the Greek version 'and the recovery of sight to the blind' wants to underline that the imprisonment is a consequence of blindness rather than from captivity in a prison. The main reason for their conclusion is that the

41 See Bailey (2008).

42 Bock underlines that Luke uses the synonymous κηρύσσει 'to preach' in place of the LXX's καλέσαι 'to call'. This term was used in order to describe Jesus' work and his preaching ministry (Bock 1994, 404).

43 See e.g. Martin (1976, 366–380).

44 "... 'the opening of the eyes of the blind.' The original Hebrew of this phrase is ambiguous. It literally reads, 'The opening—to those who are bound.' The reader is not told if this refers to 'the opening of the eyes of the blind' or the 'opening of the prisons for those who are bound'. Imagination can take the text either way. At the same time, the Qumran community was clear about including the opening of the eyes of the blind as part of the Messiah's task. The following early texts are significant as background to understanding this phrase.

- Original Hebrew: 'The opening to those who are bound.'
- Aramaic Targum of Isaiah: 'To those who are bound, Be revealed to light.'
- Greek Old Testament (LXX): 'Recovery of sight to the blind.'
- Qumran's view of the Messiah (4Q521) included: 'Opening the eyes of the blind.'
- Psalm 146:7–8: 'The Lord sets the prisoners free;/the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.'
- The Suffering Servant in Isaiah 42:7 was to: 'open the eyes that are blind,/to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon.'" (Bailey 2008, 161).

word פקח is only used in a sense of the opening of blind eyes or deaf ears. They make that conclusion because Christ himself cured many who were blind and deaf but did not free any prisoners from prison in any miraculous way. For them, the LXX's interpretation is valid because Jesus applied these verses to his own public ministry (Archer and Chirichigno 1983, 260). Unfortunately, Archer and Chirichigno do not give any evidence or scenario regarding the very important issue, which is the socio-economic, and theopolitical healing and transformation of community of faithful connected with Jesus' teaching and his public ministry. The word פקח refers to the opening of the eyes but there are two exceptions. In Is 42:20 this word means the opening of the ears while in Is 61:1 and Lk 4:18–19 it means the opening of a prison to those who are bound.⁴⁵ We may conclude that Jesus' message has also socio-economic and political implications.

The core of Jesus' message is that the good news of Isaiah 61, originally directed at the consolation of the returned exiles from Babylon, is transposed into good news for all who are oppressed. We have seen that the Isaiah text as recorded by Luke is free of any reference to that exclusiveness which is a feature of many religious traditions. Ethnicity and 'nationalism' are being challenged. The introduction of Is 58:6 into the Isaiah 61 text intensifies the social implications of Jesus' message of freedom.

PRIOR 1995, 141

The phrases 'heal the broken hearted', 'day of vengeance' and 'to comfort all who mourn' in the LXX and MT are missing in Lk 4. Even though Jesus does not mention 'the day of the vengeance' in his proclamation of the beginning his public ministry in Lk 4:18 ff., it is obvious that he quotes the Old Testament scripture. However, the idea of 'vengeance' can be found in Lk 18:7–8 (Herbert 1975, 163). It is most likely that Luke does not mention 'the day of vengeance' in order to emphasise 'the year of the Lord's favour' (Ringe 1995, 68).

According to Luther, 'the year of the Lord's favour is also the day of vengeance upon the ungodly. The prophet proclaims a hard message to the hardened and a soft, gentle one to the afflicted' (Childs 2004, 200). Also, Luke speaks about the Messiah⁴⁶ as the one who brings salvation not judgment. The evangelist Luke underlines that Jesus' ministry means the coming of the

45 See more in Harris, Waltke and Archer (2006, 1803 פקח).

46 See e.g. Danker (1976, 35–36); Bovon (2002, 153–157).

salvation time⁴⁷ (Prior 1995, 95). Throughout his mission the coming of salvation is presented by the image of the Jubilee message. The coming of the new age in the Gospel sayings such as good news is brought to the poor, liberation for the imprisoned and sight for the blind are revealed (e.g. Matt 11:2–6; Lk 4:16–21) reflect the ancient sayings in Is 61:1–2. Furthermore, it should be concluded that Luke gives a programmatic statement of Jesus' public ministry.

3.1 *The Structure of Jesus' Reading of the Scroll*

The following interpretative framework of the text as constructed by Bailey shows a specific rhetorical device for Jews (Bailey 2008, 148):

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up;

1.
 - a. and he entered (as his custom was) on the Sabbath *into the synagogue*
 - b. and he *stood up* to read
 - c. and there *was given to him the book* of the prophet Isaiah
 - d. and *he unrolled the scroll*, and found the place where it was written

2. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
for he has *anointed me*
 - a. to *preach good news* to the *poor* PREACH
 - b. He has *sent me* to proclaim to the *prisoners-freedom* SENT
 - c. and to the *blind-recovery* of *sight* SIGHT
 - b' to *send forth* the *oppressed-in freedom*, SEND
 - a' to *proclaim* the acceptable year of the Lord." PROCLAIM

47 “Good examples of his (*Lukan*) approach include making Isa. 61.1–2 the programmatic text to interpret Jesus’ ministry (Lk. 4.18–19) and his connection of the Messiah with suffering through dialogue with Isaiah 53. Through both quotation and allusion to these Isaianic texts, Luke transforms accepted Jewish notions of who will benefit from God’s salvation and what is the true nature of the Messiah’s mission. While Luke is faithful to the actual text of Isaiah, his interpretation may be considered subversive from a Jewish perspective, since he applies an inclusive hermeneutic to favourite salvation texts and radically challenges the common Jewish understanding of the Messiah.” (Mallen 2008, 199).

3. d. and *he rolled up the scroll*
- c. and *gave it back* to the attendant
- b. and *sat down*
- a. and the *eyes of all in the synagogue* were fixed on him.

The main centre of this text is the text from the book of Isaiah. The first and third parts speak about the same things in reverse order, such as 'in the synagogue', 'stood up', 'given the scroll' and 'unrolled the scroll'. This kind of chiasm is very often used in the Old Testament writings. The climax of the text is placed in the centre of the entire text surrounded by stanzas that talk about the same ideas. Bailey rightly concludes that this event was interpreted mainly for Jewish listeners and readers by a Jew who had recognised Jesus as the Messiah (Bailey 2008, 148–149). We should mention some other similar chiastic structures within this account:

- A He stood up to read (Lk 4:16c)
 B there was given to him (17a)
 C opening the book (17b)
 D Is 58:6; 61:1 ff. (18–19)
 C' closing the book (20a)
 B' he gave it back to the attendant (20b)
 A' he sat down (20c)

The line D contains the quotation from Is 58:6 and 61:1–2:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me (Is 61)
 to preach (*euaggelisasthai*) good news to the poor (Is 61)
 to proclaim release (*aphesin*) to the captives (Is 61)
 and sight to the blind (Is 61)
 to set at liberty (*apheset*) the oppressed (Is 58:6)
 to preach (*keruxai*) the acceptable year of the Lord (Is 61) (Talbert 2002, 57–58).

The main line of this account 'sight to the blind' is found within the citation. Similarly, the following chiastic structure shows the same main line:⁴⁸

48 See e.g. Bock (1994, 399, 404–414).

- A the synagogue (4:16b)
 - B standing (4:16c)
 - C receiving the Scripture (4:17a)
 - D opening the Scripture (4:17b)
 - E preaching the good news (4:18c)
 - F proclaiming release to the captive (4:18d)
 - G giving sight to the blind (4:18e)
 - F' setting free the oppressed (4:18f)
 - E' proclaiming acceptable year of the Lord (4:19a)
 - D' closing the Scripture (4:20a)
 - C' returning the Scripture (4:20b)
 - B' sitting (4:20c)
 - A' the synagogue (4:20d)

According to the mentioned chiastic structures, the text needs to be treated as a unit. The centre of the chiasmus is the phrase 'giving sight to the blind' and the broader chiastic structure of this text shows the same citation's centrality.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the Lukan text has a literary unity by constituting a unity of place, time and action.⁵⁰ A unity of place is the synagogue in Nazareth, a specific time is the Sabbath day, and a described action combines the Old Testament promise and Jesus' fulfilment of that promise. The Gospel of Luke represents the happenings surrounding Jesus' earthly life as the realisation of God's promises to Israel. In this account the prophecies of Is 58 and 61 are fulfilled in Jesus.

49 In recent study, scholars have been debating about Lukan source criticism based on their assessment of some individual words and phrases of Lk 4:16–21 (16–30), i.e. is that text in whole or in part dependent upon Mk 6:1–6a or not. See Schreck (1989, 403–436). Also, some scholars see the unity in Lk 4:16–30 comparing that text with Matt 13:54–58 and Mk 6:1–6. See e.g. Sloan (1977, 28–31); Schreck (1989, 411–427); Craddock (1990, 61–64); Bock (1994, 394–398). According to Mk 6:1–6a, after the ministry of healing, teaching and debating, Jesus appeared in the synagogue in Nazareth. However, Luke has placed the story to the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Ringe, following Schürmann, correctly concludes that the mentioned pericope has the internal coherence and logic. Thus, the text is more traditional than redactional. Ringe says that "if the narrative as it stands is both coherent and understandable in a pre-Lukan historical setting, then it may be that the event itself was reported in a form similar to Luke's, which he then simply incorporated into his Gospel instead of the version found in Mark." (Ringe 1985, 42–43; 107–109).

50 For studies of the function of Luke 4:16–30 as the programme of Luke-Acts, see e.g. Tiede (1980); Fitzmeyer (1981); Tannehill (1991); Johnson (1991).

3.2 *Interpretation of Luke 4:16–21*

Interestingly the Greek word for liberation or release (*aphíemi*) appears in the Septuagint version of the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Christian Scriptures in key Sabbath and Jubilee passages such as Deuteronomy 15, Leviticus 25, Isaiah 58 and 61, and Luke 4. It refers to release from debts, liberation from slavery, release from captivity, liberation from oppression, release from disease, and release from sin.

KINSLER and KINSLER 1999, 159

3.2.1 The Word ἄφεσις in Luke 4:18

The word ἄφεσις⁵¹ means release or cancellation of debts exemplified by mortgaged land, personal enslavement or loans. The word ἄφεσις is the translation for דָּרוֹר (Lev 25:10; Is 61:1; Jer 34:8, 15, 17; Ezek 46:17). The word דָּרוֹר denotes freedom for the slaves and return to family and property in the year of the Lord's favour, which is formulated in the similar language of the year of Jubilee (Lev 25:10). The Old Testament prophets use the word דָּרוֹר in order to speak about the year of freedom, release and Jubilee (e.g. Is 61:1; Jer 34:8, 15, 17; Ezek 46:17). In the LXX the word ἄφεσις is used around fifty times from which twenty two times in Lev 25 and 27.⁵² The word ἄφεσις is the translation for יוֹבֵל as well (Lev 25:10, 11, 12, 13, 28, 30, 31, 33, 40, 50, 52, 54; 27:17, 18, 21, 23, 24; Num 36:4).

51 "The use of the term ἄφεσις in Luke-Acts is another indication that Jesus' ministry has consequences for the audience. According to J.A. Kahmann the quotation is referring to a more peculiar aspect of ἄφεσις in Luke-Acts: the remission of sins. The term ἄφεσις appears five times in the Gospel of Luke (1,77; 3,3; 4,18^{bis} and 24,47; see also the verb in 5,20–24) and five times in Acts (2,38; 5,31; 10,43; 13,38; 26,18). Except in Luke 4,18 it is always used in the combination "remission of sins". Already at the beginning of the Gospel the remission of sins is considered a part of the salvation of which John the Baptist is the bearer (Luke 1,77–78; 3,3; cf. 1,16–17)." (Koet 1989, 34).

52 "It is extremely important to note that the focus in the meanings of ἀφίημι, ἄφεσις, and ἀπολύω is upon the guilt of the wrongdoer and not upon the wrongdoing itself. The event of wrongdoing is not undone, but the guilt resulting from such an event is pardoned. To forgive, therefore, means essentially to remove the guilt resulting from wrongdoing. Some languages make a clear distinction between guilt and sin, and terms for forgiveness are therefore related to guilt and not to the wrongdoing. Therefore, 'to forgive sins' is literally 'to forgive guilt.' Though terms for 'forgiveness' are often literally 'to wipe out,' 'to blot out,' or 'to do away with,' it is obviously not possible to blot out or to wipe out an event, but it is possible to remove or obliterate the guilt." (Louw and Nida 1989 ἀφίημι; ἄφεσις; ἀπολύω, 40.8–40.13).

The Hebrew word שְׁמִטָּה is used for the institution of seventh year in Exod 23:11; Deut 15:1, 2, 3, 9; 31:10. It is also translated by ἄφεσις (Koet 1989, 31).

Accordingly, it should be concluded that the words יוֹבֵל, דְּרֹר and שְׁמִטָּה indicating the seventh year and year of Jubilee are translated by the LXX word ἄφεσις. The emphasis of the year of the Lord's favour in Is 61:1–2 is on deliverance of the poor and oppressed, which is the fundamental concern of the Sabbath year and Jubilee texts described in Deut 15 and Lev 25 (Kinsler and Kinsler 1999, 81). "This word (ἄφεσις) represents doubtless the primary theological and verbal connection, and reference to, the levitical proclamation of Jubilee." (Sloan 1977, 36–37). This word ἄφεσις in the LXX Is 58:6 and 61:1 indicating that the legislation of Jubilee law described in Lev 25:8–55 and the seventh/Sabbath year in Exod 23:10–11; Lev 25:1–7 and Deut 15:1–18 are an important background for Lk 4 (Koet 1989, 31).

Furthermore, this word ἄφεσις in the LXX Lev 16:26 means forgiveness or sending away. In the New Testament this word usually means forgiveness.⁵³ The LXX uses the word ἄφεσις in 61:1 and Lk 4:18 (19), which means release from bondage or imprisonment. The Lukan tendency is to speak of salvation as encircling physical healing and inclusion in God's eschatological family (e.g. Lk 8:12, 36, 48; 13:23; 17:19; 18:26, 42; 19:10) (Talbert 2002, 58). Furthermore, this word refers not only to forgiveness but also to the new covenant or a contract.⁵⁴ "In the new covenant forgiveness involves not a passing over of sins as in the old covenants but their removal from the mind of God." (Friberg 2006, 4242 ἄφεσις). Likewise, the word ἀφίημι is used to refer to the remission of financial debt (Matt 18:27, 32), forgiveness from sin (Matt 6:14–15; Mk 2:5–10; 3:28; Lk 5:20 ff.; 7:47–50) and freedom from captivity (Lk 14:18).

53 "While ἄφεσις almost always occurs in the designation 'forgiveness' (of sins) in Luke-Acts, it is almost impossible that Luke by means of this term does not allude to this important element of Jesus' proclamation of salvation in Luke 4:18–19. The good message of forgiveness implies a call to repentance. When Jesus presents himself as the prophet announcing ἄφεσις the listeners are warned. The prophet's glad tidings offer them the choice of acceptance or non-acceptance of his preachings of repentance and the forgiveness of sins (cf. Luke 24:47). Jesus presents himself by using the combined Isaiah quotation, which is a message of salvation, as a prophet bearing good news. Yet, considering the nature of this message (the realisation of the ideals similar to those of the Jubilee Year), the use of ἄφεσις in the Gospel of Luke and the radical character of Jesus' position on riches and possessions in Luke-Acts, this message also contains an implicit call to repent." (Koet 1989, 34–35).

54 E.g. Matt 26:28; Mk 1:4; 3:29; Lk 1:77; 3:3; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18; Col 1:14; Heb 9:22; 10:18.

For Luke, forgiveness of sins⁵⁵ is closely related to the social ministry of proclaiming good news to the poor and the ministry of healing.⁵⁶ Excluded and marginalised people have been accepted into the community of the faithful through forgiveness and its socio-economic consequences (Tannehill 1996, 92). “Jesus did seek to create a new community of people before God who would be called out from the ways of the world and would reflect a different, even revolutionary, way of life to the world. The revolutionary call of that community was to show God’s love for all and to offer comfort to those of God’s people who suffered oppression.” (Bock 1994, 401). Jesus inaugurates his ministry of teaching, preaching and healing throughout his arrival of the time of salvation.

3.2.2 The Year of the Lord’s Favour

Some scholars have argued that the year 26/27 A.D. was the Jubilee year when Jesus announced the beginning of his public year, i.e. the year of God’s favour (Nolland 1989, 197). Yoder, following Trocmé, says also that the fulfilment Jesus announced in Lk 4:21 is a specific historical reality (Yoder 1972, 39). However, it is obvious that Jesus’ statement about the promise fulfilment of the year of God’s favour relates to something more than a specific historical reality.

For Sloan, Is 58:6 and 61:1 ff. have the Jubilee manifestation mainly because of their usage of the word *ἄφεσις* (Sloan 1977, 40). Contrarily to Sloan, Tannehill says “while it seems clear that Is 61:1–2 develop themes from the Jubilee year, it is not so clear that the author of Luke-Acts was aware of the connection between this passage and the law of Jubilee. This remains a possibility but has not yet been proved. This is not to deny that the social concern expressed in the Jubilee law is also present in Luke, for the ‘good news to the poor’ does reflect a concern for economic justice,⁵⁷ as Jesus’ later teaching will make clear” (Tannehill 1991, 68). Contrarily to Tannehill and Sloan, Schreck concludes that it is better to see and interpret the Jubilee year in Lk 4 as image, metaphor, parallel or allusion in correlation to Is 61 and Jesus’ public ministry (Schreck 1989, 451).

Most biblical interpreters in general agree that ‘the year of the Lord’s favour’ in Is 61 and Lk 4 refers to the practise of the year of Jubilee in Lev 25. The institutions of the Jubilee and Sabbath year were temporally and ceremonially connected with the Day of Atonement (e.g. Lev 25:9). The thematic setting

55 E.g. In Lk 24:47 Jesus’ disciples are instructed to announce forgiveness of sins in Jesus name.

56 “Salvation in Luke is good news for the poor, and Jesus will not only proclaim it so, but also practice it.” (Vinson 2008, 120).

57 See e.g. Esler (1987); Moxnes (1988).

of Is 58 is a Sabbath text and its central concern is a true fast. The only fast commanded in the Pentateuch is that on the Day of Atonement (e.g. Lev 26:29–31). Furthermore, for some scholars Is 58:6 was read on the Day of Atonement as an inauguration of the year of Jubilee. The year of Jubilee began on that day.

However, Lk 4 does not mention explicitly some main elements, which we can find in the texts concerning the Sabbath, Sabbath year and Jubilee. These explicit elements are cancellation of debts, release of slaves, return to family land, and rest for the land, workers and all others. Nevertheless, Lk 4 brings a more radical message of Jubilee proclaiming a common, comprehensive reaction to exploitation and poverty as God's intent. The year of God's favour focuses on freedom and fullness of life for God's people. The eschatological fulfilment of the Lord's year of favour is proclaimed by Jesus, and the implementation of his favour was predicted in the Jubilee year in Lev 25 but its fulfilment has begun in Jesus' time. The beginning of Jesus' public ministry shows that the new time of salvation and the time of fulfilment have come (Childs 2001, 507). Jesus proclaimed the inauguration of the legislation of Jubilee emphasising the message of the salvation of people as well.

Jesus' announcement of the 'acceptable year of the Lord' in Lk 4:19 should be interpreted not as a "single year but rather the messianic time of fulfilment, and among the (many) scriptural motifs and practices transcendently fulfilled are the customs concerning Sabbatical/Jubilee years." (Schreck 1989, 451). The vision of the year of Jubilee needs to be seen as a metaphor or image of the new time. The imagery of the Jubilee found in Is 61 is linked to the initial celebration of God's reign. It represents the calling for "change of allegiance required from loyalties to the systems and structures of the present order, to a new participation in God's reign of justice and peace. The prophet becomes a herald leading the inaugural parade of that reign, trumpeting God's Jubilee or 'liberty', which is what the underlying Hebrew word meant." (Ringe 1995, 69).

Moore argues that Is 58:6 and 61:1–2 are connected but it is not possible to discover the intensity with which Luke intends to stress this relation.⁵⁸ For Luke it is important to bring the message of Jubilee referring to personal deliverance through physical and spiritual salvation. That salvation is coming from the servant, prophet and Messiah, i.e. from Jesus Christ who fulfils in himself this threefold ministry. Moore interprets the theme of Jubilee in Lk 4:18–19 not as socio-economic reform but as personal reform mainly based upon forgiveness

⁵⁸ Also, Tannehill interprets Is 61:1–2 as the text which develops its theme based on the legislation of the year of Jubilee. However, for him the question regarding the connection of the theme of the Jubilee between Is 61:1–2 and Lk 4 is still remains open (Tannehill 1991, 68).

of sins. Furthermore, forgiveness of the sins of the individual is interrelated with his or her physical and spiritual needs as well (Moore 1995, 93). Moore is only partially right regarding personal transformation because socio-economic reform is important just as the personal reform. That personal transformational reform generates from itself the socio-economic transformation as well.⁵⁹

It has been generally accepted that the biblical Jubilee as law or ideal speaks about social reform. For North the Jubilee legislation in Lev 25 refers only to the independent worker and the main goal of the legislation was to keep property in the hands of the Israelites' families. Moreover, this study concludes that Lev 25 uses and redefines the earlier codes regarding the poor-slavery relief legislations and socio-economic reforms. The main topics are debt and the small independent farmer. Debt is presented as slavery. The release from slavery means cancellation of debts as well. The Lord is the owner of the land. Loans and interest must be regulated according to the principle that the Lord has a permanent possession of everything. According to Is 61 and Lk 4, the Jubilee legislation may be interpreted as an eschatological Jubilee or as an exilic innovation aimed at the return of previous belongings in Judah (North 2000, 17–19).

The acceptable year of the Lord in Lk 4 is proclaimed in a similar way as in Lev 25. Kinsler underline that the year of the Lord's grace in Lk 4:18–19 refers to the Sabbath year and Jubilee year (Lev 25) in the following way:

- a) The phrase 'to bring good news to the poor' means socio-economic order and spiritual blessing of all indebted, landless, enslaved and unemployed people.
- b) 'To proclaim release to the captives' is concerned with the debtors who were imprisoned because of their inability to repay their debts.
- c) 'Recovery of sight to the blind' refers to the healing of the poor and all those who are morally and spiritually blind.
- d) 'To let the oppressed go free' must be interpreted and taken into consideration in terms of the Sabbath-Jubilee regulation, especially to free slaves, and with socio-economic regulations that will protect persons from debt slavery and loss of land.
- e) 'The year of the Lord's favour' in Lk 4 does not mean a strict period of one, seven or fifty years. Rather, it refers to the coming of God's reign in a new time of everlasting freedom for God's people from every kind of exploitation or oppression. (Kinsler and Kinsler 1999, 104–105).

59 See e.g. Martin (1976, 366–380).

Jesus made a close connection between the practise of Jubilee legislation and God's mercy (e.g. Lk 12:33; 18:22; 19:1–10) (Trocmé 2007, 36–37). That message of liberation is first of all for those who suffer injustice and for the broken-hearted because of corrupted structures and societies. Those people have been encouraged by Jesus' message of freedom (Koole 2001, 264–265). The radical announcement of Jesus provokes such hostility among some of his listeners that they wanted to kill him (Lk 4:29–30). Jesus' vision of Jubilee brings to some people a new hope but to others a shocking devastation (Brueggemann 1998, 214).

3.2.3 The Phrase 'Bring Good News to the Poor'

Lk 4:18 says 'he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor'.⁶⁰ Luke uses the Greek word πτωχός for the poor.⁶¹ It occurs 34 times in the New Testament. The word πτωχός can mean poor in the world's possessions, oppressed, miserable, beggarly, incapable.⁶² In a broader sense, it can mean destitute of wealth, influence, position, honours (also Is 61:1; Lk 4:18; 6:20; 7:22). "The 'poor' represent not only the economically impoverished but all those who are marginal or excluded from human fellowship, the outcast." (Johnson 1991, 79). Luke uses the theme of the poor ten times. Also, Luke very often puts in relation 'the poor' vs. 'the rich' (Lk 1:53; 4:18; 6:20–24; 7:22; 14:13, 21; 16:19–31). The rich do not need God's comfort and they refuse the Prophet while the rejected poor people accept the Prophet who is taking care of them (Johnson 1991, 22). For the first time Luke speaks about the *poor* people in this context of Jesus' preaching and announcing his public ministry, especially to evangelise *poor* people in Lk 4:18.

In contrast to the other Gospels, Luke frequently uses the verb *euangelizomai* ("announce good news") to refer to the preaching of Jesus (4:43; 7:22; 8:1; 9:6; 16:16; 20:1). That this good news is especially for the poor is also characteristically Lukan. The terms "poor", "captives", "blind", and

60 See e.g. Green (2014).

61 The reasons of poverty are many. For example, the natural catastrophes like famines, wars and disease affect the existence of poverty. High taxes, rents and debts also exploit people's labour and they are the main causes of people's poverty. The Bible strictly speaks against the exploitation of the poor (Exod 23:6; Lev 25:6; Deut 15:17; Job 31:16–32; Ps 82; Am 2:7; 5:7–11; 8:4–6), widows, orphans and strangers as well (Exod 22:22–24; Lev 19:33; Deut 27:19).

62 E.g. Matt 5:3; 11:5; Mk 10:21; 12:42 ff.; 14:7; Lk 6:20; 7:22; 14:13, 21; 16:20, 22; 18:22; 19:8; 21:3; John 12:6, 8; Rom 15:26; 1 Cor 15:10; 2 Cor 6:10; Gal 2:10; 4:9; Jas 2:2, 5; Rev 3:17.

“oppressed” may all have some metaphorical range. Yet in Luke the “poor” means first of all those at the bottom of the economic scale, who may lack even the basis for survival.

TANNEHILL 1996, 91–92

In the Beatitude we read ‘blessed are you *poor* for yours is the kingdom of God’ (Lk 6:20).⁶³ When John the Baptist sent his disciples to Jesus to ask, ‘Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?’ (Lk 7:19). Luke said that Jesus’ reply was “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the *poor* ...” (Lk 7:22–23).

The preaching of good news to the poor is of the same order as the freedom of captives, the restoring of sight of the blind, and the liberation of the oppressed and as the healing of the lame, the lepers, the deaf and the raising of the dead (Lk 4:18; 7:22). The poor show different modes of disadvantaged people in community in a similar way to the lame, the blind, the captives, the oppressed, the sick, and the deaf. It is most likely that the poor of Lk 4:18 and 7:22 are the members of the community who suffered deprivation and exploitation by the rich members of that community. The poor and the oppressed may be the group of people who were imprisoned for debts as well.⁶⁴

It is important to underline that Luke uses the word ἄφεσις, which means forgiveness of sins (Lk 1:77)⁶⁵ and debts (Lk 11:4).⁶⁶ Thus, the specific characteristic of the Gospel of Luke is that forgiveness of sins is closely connected with the social ministry of announcing good news to the poor and with the ministry of healing people.

63 See e.g. Jeremias (1961); Brown (1968); Dodd (1968); Fitzmyer (1981).

64 See e.g. Green (2014).

65 “ἄφεσις, ἕσσεως, ἢ *release* Lk 4:18. *Pardon, cancellation* of an obligation, a punishment, or guilt, hence *forgiveness* of sins Mk 1:4; 3:29; Lk 3:3; Ac 10:43; Eph 1:7.” (Gingrich and Danker 2006, 31).

66 “ἀφίημι—1. *let go, send away* Mk 4:36; *give up* Mt 27:50; *utter* Mk 15:37; *divorce* 1 Cor 7:11ff. *Cancel, pardon* Mt 18:27, 32; *remit, forgive* sins, etc. Mt 6:12, 14f.; Mk 3:28; Lk 12:10; Ro 4:7; 1 J 1:9; 2:12.—2. *leave* lit. Mt 4:11; 19:27; Mk 13:34; Lk 10:30; *abandon* Mk 14:50. *Let* someone *have* something Mt 5:40; *give* peace J 14:27. Fig. *give up, abandon* Ro 1:27; Hb 6:1; Rv 2:4; *neglect* Mt 23:23.—3. *let, let go, permit, tolerate* Mk 5:19; Ac 5:38; Rv 2:20; 11:9. *Let* someone *go on* J 11:48. The imperatives ἄφες, ἄφετε are used with the subjunctive, esp. in the first person ἄφες ἐκβάλλω τὸ χάρφος *let me take out the speck* Mt 7:4; ἄφες ἴδωμεν *let us see* 27:49; also with ἵνα and the third person ἄφες αὐτήν, ἵνα τηρήσῃ αὐτό *let her keep it* J 12:7.” (Gingrich and Danker 2006, 31).

Lk 4:18–19 uses the language of Is 58:6 ff. in order to speak about the cultic observation that is closely connected with the socio-economic issues. The responsibilities of the society to the poor and especially relatives are the obligations mentioned in the legislations of the Sabbath and Jubilee year (Deut 15:1–18; Lev 25; Is 61:1–2a; Lk 4:18–19). The cultic observation of the Sabbath in Is 58 is connected with the social obligations. The practise of justice towards the oppressed, sick, poor, needy will initiate God's response to their cultic practises. Is 58 and 61 present the legal and socio-economic obligations of Israel in the same way. Their messages are the response to 'the religious cry of the cult and physical cry of social need' (Sloan 1977, 187–189). Accordingly, it should be concluded that forgiveness is interrelated with the social issues.

The Greek word εὐαγγελίζω means to bring, proclaim or to announce good news. Mostly in the New Testament this word includes bringing about knowledge of God's message of salvation, i.e. making known the message of salvation (Friberg 2006, 11950 εὐαγγελίζω). Furthermore, this word is mostly used in the New Testament for the good news of the coming God's kingdom, for the glad tidings of the salvation of Jesus Christ and what relates to this salvation. Jesus is a trustworthy interpreter of the Hebrew Scriptures and he introduces the coming of the kingdom of God in his public ministry (Koet 1989, 155–156). That kingdom includes also his death, resurrection and his second coming in the future time (Prior 1995, 122).

The Greek verbal adjective δεκτόν from δέχομαι can mean acceptable, favourable, appropriate, welcoming, pleasing (Friberg 2006, 5969 δεκτός). This word refers to that which is pleasing in a view of its being appropriate, acceptable, favourable. It can denote the most favourable time of salvation and the time of God's favour. "In any case, the good news for the poor consists precisely in the arrival of the kingdom of God in Jesus' person, an event that puts into practice the provisions of the year of Jubilee, or the year of the Lord's favour." (Hanks 1983, 114).

3.2.4 'Today' as a Concept of Time

Luke uses the word ἐνιαυτός (year) in order to show a verbal and theological parallel with Lev 25:10 and Is 61. In Lk 4:19 ἐνιαυτός means a special epoch when God will accept and free his people from all kind of debts. This word includes a real break-in into the present reality of a new epoch that brings restoration and a new life order. It is important to emphasise that the Lukan usage of ἐνιαυτός does not mean "a quantitative reckoning of time (for that, both Lev 25 and Luke use ἔτος), but rather the signalling of an existential, qualitative irruption into the present reality of a special age, a new era, indeed, a restored order of things." (Sloan 1977, 34).

At the end of his referring to the Old Testament reading he said ‘today this scripture has been fulfilled⁶⁷ in your hearing’ (Lk 4:21). The Greek word *σήμερον* means ‘Today’,⁶⁸ which shows that something new is entering into present life.⁶⁹ Jesus Christ announced in the synagogue of Nazareth that this Word has been fulfilled in him personally (Lk 4:18 ff.).

When *πληρώω* is used in 4:21, it is concerned with the realisation of what is announced in the Isaiah quotation. The quotation is a characterisation of Jesus’ prophetic activity. Jesus utters the fulfilment of this prophecy (cf. the perfect tense). He announces the realisation of these promises. Considering the announcement of the year of salvation, the fulfilment of a certain period of time may also be implied. Jesus’ speaking signifies the beginning of a new time: *σήμερον*, a favourite word in Luke—used mostly in the context of a message of salvation—equally indicates the start of a new era (Lk 2:11; 13:32, 33; 19:5, 9; 23:43).

KOET 1989, 37

Moore interprets the Isaiah quotation in the Lucan narrative, especially throughout the theme of Jubilee, as the inauguration of the messianic time and the time of the fulfilment of Old Testament promises.⁷⁰ With Jesus Christ’s coming into this world, the new messianic age has begun according to Lk 4:16–21. The prophecy regarding the year of the Lord’s favour and freedom for the captives and oppressed from Is 58:6 and 61:1–2a have been fulfilled in Jesus and his announcement that his public ministry has begun in that day with the fulfilment of Isaiah’s prophecy (Baker 1998, 52). The time of Jubilee from Is 61 has been fulfilled in Jesus’ time according to Lk 4:21.

67 In the New Testament the word *πληρώω* can mean fill, make full, complete, bring to completion, finish something already begun, fulfil a prophecy, promise, finish, bring to an end e.g. Matt 1:22; 5:17; 13:35, 48; 26:54, 56; Mk 1:15; 14:49; Lk 3:5; 7:1; 9:31; 21:24; 22:16; John 3:29; 7:8; 12:3; 16:6; 17:13; 18:9, 32; 19:24, 36; Acts 2:2, 28; 5:28; 7:23, 30; 9:23; 12:25; 13:25; 14:26; 19:21; 24:27; Rom 1:29; 13:8; 2 Cor 10:6; Gal 5:14; Eph 5:18; Phil 2:2; 4:18; Col 1:25; 4:17. (Gingrich and Danker 1983, 161).

68 See more about ‘today’ in Danker (1988, 107); Craddock (1990, 62); Evans (1990, 272); Stein (1992, 157); Bock (1994, 412–413); Green (1995, 94–95); Morris (2008, 126–127).

69 E.g. Moloney underlines that “a number of themes in the New Testament show that the early Church was influenced by the idea and practice of Jubilee, especially as it is found in Second and Third Isaiah.” He reflects upon the explicit use of Jubilee texts in the Gospel of Luke and understanding of the rule of Jesus’ followers according to Jesus’ proclamation of the ‘today’ Jubilee (Moloney 2000, 231).

70 See also Moore (1995).

Jesus himself is the main agent responsible for that new time of fulfilment. 'Today' represents the time of God's reign while his promises have been fulfilled. That time brings changes for the poor, exploited and oppressed.⁷¹ The time of God is 'today' and it means the beginning of Jubilee. In the Lukan context, 'today' has to be continued (Craddock 1990, 62). Luke uses the word *σήμερον* very often in his Gospel in order to speak mainly about the opportunity for salvation in this very moment or to denote the eschatological time⁷² (Bock 1994, 412; Moore 1995, 94).

With this reading Jesus Christ established his messianic credentials saying that the message of Is 61 has been fulfilled in him. His messianic work brings the fulfilment of the promise of salvation but his judgment will be realised in his second coming⁷³ (Motyer 1999, 376). Jesus uses and interprets the reading of the prophet Isaiah in conditions of eschatological fulfilment. Jesus as the Anointed Messiah brings a personal and eschatological fulfilment of the Jubilee prophecy (Sloan 1977, 47–48). It can be concluded that Jesus has established the eschatological Jubilee in an inauguration of his public ministry. Jesus' quotation of Is 58:6 and 61:1–2 describes his mission as the Spirit-anointed mission that also includes the eschatological implementation of the Old Testament theme of Jubilee. Luke represents Jesus' identification as the anointed one described in Is 61 and the One who embodies in himself the realisation of the Old Testament promises. The evangelist Luke underlines Jesus' messianic integrity and his messianic anointing (Strauss 1995, 209).

Regarding the person and inauguration of the public ministry, the Gospel of Luke presents Jesus as a prophet, especially as the eschatological prophet and royal-messianic figure.⁷⁴ Jesus as an eschatological prophet and Messiah will bring God's salvation in the eschatological time (Strauss 1995, 219, 228–230). As already mentioned, Luke's main focus of the narrative about Jesus' Nazareth sermon contains Is 58:6 and 61:1–2 describing Jesus as the servant-prophet who proclaims the eschatological Jubilee (Watts 2009, 221).

The socio-economic and political consequences of the institution of Jubilee are not yet completely fulfilled. Accordingly, Webb says "the fulfilment that came with Jesus has given it a far richer meaning for us today. The 'year of the Lord's favour' that he inaugurated is still in force, and will continue to be so right through until his coming again (Lk 4:19; Heb 2:3; 2 Cor 6:2. Notice, in Lk

71 According to Siker, the year of the Lord's favour in Lk 4 is announced first to the Gentiles (Siker 1992, 70–93).

72 Lk 2:11; 4:21; 5:26; 12:28; 13:32–33; 19:5, 9; 22:34, 61; 23:43.

73 E.g. John 5:22–29; 2 Thes 1:7–10.

74 E.g. 4:22b–30; 7:11–35, 39; 9:28–36; 11:47–52; 13:33–34; 24:19; Acts 3:22–23; 7:22 ff.

4:19–20, that Jesus stopped reading and rolled up the scroll in the middle of a sentence. The ‘day of vengeance’ awaits his return as judge.” (Webb 1996, 235). Sloan emphasises that the complete fulfilment of the Jubilee message, especially Jubilee message of justice, will happen by the forgiveness of sins, the appropriate worship of God, the restoration of all created things, and Jesus’ *parousia* (Sloan 1977, 194).

3.2.5 The Person and Role of Jesus Christ

Jesus quoted Is 61:1–2a in order to identify the role and person of the Messiah⁷⁵ Servant with himself (Lk 4:18–19). The first generation of Christians read Is 61:1–3 as an addition to the servant sayings in Is 40–55. With these sayings Jesus started his ministry (Lk 4:16–21)⁷⁶ as the anointed prophet, the righteous one and the servant⁷⁷ (Blenkinsopp 2003, 74).

Jesus is usually presented as a *χριστός*. *Χριστός* is the Greek word, which describes the anointed One, the Messiah, the Christ⁷⁸ (e.g. Matt 2:4; 16:16; Mk 8:29; Lk 2:26; 4:41; John 1:41; 4:25; Acts 3:18; 5:42; Rom 9:5; Rev 11:15). Also, it can

75 See e.g. Brown (1993).

76 “The Scriptures are programmatic for Jesus’ activities. In chapter 1 about Luke 4:16–30 I argued, that Isa 61:1–2a/58,6 serves as an outline for several aspects of Jesus’ work of salvation (Luke 4:18–19; cf. 7,22). Jesus uses the Scriptures as the programme of his own life and ministry: while interpreting them, Jesus expounds the things concerning himself (Luke 24,27). When Jesus explains the Scriptures to his disciples, he shows them that—in C.H. Crosgrove’s words—‘the Old Testament discloses to Jesus his marching orders’. The dept of the Scriptures’ influence on Luke’s depiction of Jesus suggests that Jesus finds in them the motives for his activities. Thus the Scriptures are a key to an understanding of Jesus.” (Koet 1989, 154).

77 About role of the Christ in the Nazareth sermon and in the Gospel narrative see Strauss (1995, 250–260).

78 “In summary, whatever additional significance Luke may attribute to the baptismal anointing by the Spirit in Lk 3:21–22 (cf. Lk 4:18), a royal-anointing is certainly in view. This is indicated by:

- 1) Luke’s Davidic-messianic interpretation of *χριστός* in the birth narrative, together with
 - a) Luke’s redaction in favour of the title in 3:15b; and
 - b) the Lukan connection between the title and Jesus’ baptismal anointing (Acts 4:18; 10:36–38);
- 2) The royal-messianic implications of eschatological baptism ‘by Spirit and fire’ (Is 11:4; 4 Ezra 13:8–11, 27, 37–38);
- 3) The relationship of the Spirit to the coming Davidic king in Judaism;
- 4) The allusion to Ps 2:7 in the divine voice (cf. Acts 13:33; Acts 4:25–26).” (Strauss 1995, 208).

mean a proper name Christ (e.g. Mk 1:1; 9:41; Acts 24:24; Rom 1:4, 6, 8; Heb 3:6; 1Pt 1:1–3) (Gingrich and Danker 1983, 218). “The Lukan narrator is aware that the verb ‘anoint’ (*chrío*) is related to the Jewish title *Christos* (‘Anointed One’ or ‘Messiah’; cf. Acts 4:26–27, where the two words are used together). Anointed with the Spirit, Jesus is the Messiah, the king of Israel ...” (Tannehill 1996, 91–92).

Jesus Christ as the Anointed One⁷⁹ has come to bring good news to the poor, liberty for prisoners and oppressed, recovery of sight for the blind and the year of the Lord's favour (Moore 1995, 87–88). Thus, Is 61:1 ff., in relation with Lk 4:18 ff., refers to the Messiah. Jesus reads from the book of Isaiah a “first person passage of current messianic import ‘the *Spirit* of the Lord is *upon me* because he has *anointed me*,’ ... (4:18 f.); and finally he claims that this *scripture* is *now fulfilled* ... this Jesus is presented as the Messiah, standing up among his own people to deliver his inaugural kingly address” (Sloan 1977, 53–54). The messianic movement of Jesus is the activity of liberation and it relates to the prophetic call for justice. Luke presents Jesus as the Messiah who inaugurates the liberation of his people who need to perform justice and compassion towards the poor and freedom for the oppressed. However, the most important is that Jesus is the one who fulfils the promises described in the Scriptures.

The eschatological usage of Is 61 in Lk 4:16–21 indirectly carries also two christological names that represent Jubilee meaning. These two names are Messiah and the prophet like Moses (Strauss 1995, 264–272; Hays 1996, 117–118).⁸⁰ Messiah as the title was frequently in use in early Jewish writings mostly connected with eschatological themes. Especially in the first century B.C.E. the Anointed One, i.e. Messiah was presented as God's deliverer in eschatological time. The close relationship between the message of Jubilee and the eschatological time are frequently connected (Sloan 1977, 44–46, 98).

Sloan compares Is 61:1 ff. with the Qumran materials, such as 11Q Melch. Document.⁸¹ This Qumran text, reflecting on Is 61:1 ff., underlines the importance of expecting the eschatological prophet. That prophet should be somebody like Moses. The Qumran text 11Q Melch. may be a clear evidence that the person in Is 61:1 should be the eschatological prophet. The institution of the year of Jubilee was originally linked with Moses. 11Q Melch. uses a reference to the prophet like Moses. When Jesus announces that he is the one who is anointed with the Spirit and proclaims the year of the Lord's favour, he is presenting himself as

79 See e.g. Danker (1976, 35–36).

80 See also Strauss (1995, 264–272); Hays (1996, 117–118).

81 See e.g. Bovon (2002, 153).

the prophet like Moses.⁸² Jesus is the prophet like Moses⁸³ who brings ideal eschatological hope and future restoration of all things in the end times. In this context, the year of Jubilee is inaugurated as the eschatological year (Sloan 1977, 71–73).

The gift of the Spirit of the Lord, the anointment of the Messiah and the year of the Lord's favour create the unity in Luke's quotation of Is 61. This unity clarifies that without the king there can be no kingdom. The Messiah, who is the Anointed One, brings that kingdom and salvation (Bailey 2008, 169). The anointing in Is 61 and Lk 4 refer to the coming of the Lord's salvation. Jesus interconnects himself with the promise of the coming of Messiah who will bring the good news, free the needy and heal the broken-hearted.

Luke would have his first century readers believe that Jesus entered Nazareth, the city of his upbringing, and read in the synagogue from Is 61, a well-known Messianic text of Scripture which spoke both of the eschatological year of Jubilee and the charismatic activity of its kingly/prophetic agent. Furthermore Luke declares that Jesus so interpreted that text as to proclaim himself as its present fulfilment, the very one whose activity was therein spoken of, and thereby claimed to fulfil simultaneously the roles ascribed both to the Messiah King and the Prophet like Moses of the end times.

SLOAN 1977, 74

Jesus was both the expected eschatological prophet like Moses and Messiah. He received the Holy Spirit and gave it to his followers while Moses received the living words and gave them to the people (Lk 2:33; 7:38). The saving teaching of Jesus is filled with prophetic power (Lk 3:23) (Johnson 1991, 20). Jesus Messiah is the bearer of the levitical year of Jubilee in Lk 4:16–21. Jesus' message in Lk 4:16–21 has been interpreted eschatologically through Is 61 and applied by Jesus to himself. Luke presents Jesus as the Messiah of the Jews and the Gentiles as well. His theology and mission are universal. Accordingly, the blessings of the year of Jubilee go beyond the restrictions of the law of Moses. Sloan correctly emphasises that the Jubilee has a prophetic-eschatological meaning (Sloan 1977, 10, 87–89).

The prophetic speech in Is 61:1ff. is similar to speeches from the Ancient Near East regarding the enthronement of a king. The institution of the Jubilee year and the enthronement of a king in the Ancient Near East i.e. the ideas of

82 E.g. Deut 18:15; Acts 3:21–22.

83 See also Johnson (1991, 18–21); Strauss (1995, 278–285).

kingship and Messiah have a literal and historical connotation. Furthermore, some scholars make connections between the institution of the Jubilee year, the New Year's Festival and the kingly Messiah. For them, at the beginning of the New Year also the year of Jubilee was proclaimed.

In the history of Israel the year of freedom was connected to king and his practise (e.g. Jer 34:8–22). Also, Is 61:1 ff., in regard to the expectations of Is 9:6–7, 11:1–5 and 42:1–4, has the same connotation regarding the anointed person and his specific speech of establishing justice and righteousness. The speech of the coming person and his royal position will bring restoration and establishment of justice, righteousness and an everlasting covenant with the Lord. He will come and guide the institution of the year of Jubilee. Furthermore, in Lk 4:21 Jesus has personally fulfilled the message of Is 61. Jesus, as a great king and Messiah, inaugurates the year of Jubilee.

It must be concluded from the above discussion of jubiliary language and themes in Luke, and especially from the exposition of particular pericopes in Luke that are clearly dependent as the background upon Jubilee and Sabbath year passages from the Old Testament, that Luke has purposefully employed the picture of Jubilee—consistent with its historical application by Jewish legislators, prophets, apocalyptists, and priestly sectarians—as a metaphorical expression of the eschatological salvation of God ... Furthermore, the clear association by Luke of such prominent themes as “the kingdom of God”, “the poor”, “preaching the gospel”, and “forgiveness” with the Old Testament vision of Jubilee serves to make the third gospel fairly rife with eschatological import.

SLOAN 1977, 163

Jesus as the anointed Messiah brings eschatological hope of salvation. The advent of the eschaton is presented in Is 61:1 ff. and Lk 4:16–21 by the activity of the Messiah, i.e. Jesus Christ. The advent of the eschaton is the acceptable year of the Lord, which is presented in terms of the release and freedom of the year of Jubilee described in the Pentateuch. The book of Isaiah has employed the concept of Jubilee legislation in an eschatological context. Interestingly, since the first century A.D. the history of Jewish interpretation of Is 61 has interpreted this text as a beginning of the new eschatological age as well (Bock 1994, 407). That eschatological text of Is 58:6 and 61:1 ff. is expressed in Lk 4:16–21. Jesus as a prophetic Messiah announces himself to be the bringer of this new eschatological time.⁸⁴

84 “... Luke’s work is permeated with imagery drawn from the Isaianic portrait of eschatolog-

3.3 *Conclusion on the Year of God's Favour in the Gospel of Luke*

The idea of Jubilee is important for understanding the theological message of the Gospel of Luke. Jesus' public proclamation of his ministry includes also coming of the kingdom of God and salvation. Jesus indirectly describes the kingdom of God in the context of the message of Jubilee. The kingdom brings freedom, release and healing and it is present where God reigns in his authority.

Lk 4:16–21 describes Jesus' fulfilment of the Old Testament promises, which in itself shows the feature of the kingdom of God. The kingdom is already present in Jesus' ministry but still it is not completely present and consumed. It is 'already but not yet present'. The time of God's kingdom and salvation has begun and still continues. Luke presents the message of Jubilee as an eschatological feature of the kingdom of God and his salvation, which has begun through Jesus' public ministry. Jesus Christ has brought in his person and ministry the new time. He is active and participates in the life of his followers in the present time. Jesus' presentation of the kingdom invites people for ethical living and socio-economic justice that will produce the new and transformed community of the faithful.

Jesus will show his complete reign in an eschatological time. God's reign will destroy the old order of exploitative structures and establish the proper relations within the community of the faithful. Jesus has proclaimed the coming of the kingdom of God, which will abolish all forms of slavery in human lives.

As already mentioned, there are four main Old Testament requirements of the Jubilee legislation. These are redistribution of wealth, the cancellation of debts, the resting of land and the release of slaves and hired workers. Even though the Gospel of Luke does not explicitly talk about the idea of Jubilee, it is obvious that the Jubilee message may be discovered through its combination of these mentioned requirements.

Regarding the redistribution of wealth, Jesus referred his message to the agrarian economy of the first century Palestine. Jesus' Jubilee message in Lk 4 aimed to overcome and solve the problems of debt slavery and unequal economical distribution of wealth. The next requirement, cancellation of debts, should be seen in Jesus' teaching in Lk 11:4 where Jesus teaches people to pray "forgive us our sins for we forgive everyone who is indebted to us". Luke

ical salvation, including comfort and consolation, healing and release of prisoners, sight for the blind, light for the Gentiles, Spirit-anointing and the proclamation of good news. It is not surprising, then, that Luke would also pick up on the Isaianic theme of an eschatological new exodus ... Luke implies that Jesus is not only the royal messiah and Isaianic servant but also a prophet like Moses about to fulfil a 'new exodus' in Jerusalem." (Strauss 1995, 298, 333).

includes sins and debts that should be forgiven, i.e. financial, material and moral debts as well. This part of the Lord's Prayer is closely connected with the Old Testament legislation of the year of Jubilee. This kind of forgiveness means to practise the Jubilee. Luke has a deep interest in the socio-economic legislation of the Jubilee and his version of the Lord's Prayer brings the message of Jubilee as well.

The requirements of the rest of land and the release of slaves and hired workers may be indirectly recognised in the Lukan message as well. Even though Jesus did not directly talk about resting of land, it is most likely that during the time of Jesus' public ministry the Jews had observed the rules every seventh year. Luke underlines that the main recipients of good news are the poor and the needy. The Torah vision of Jubilee in Lev 25 and its prophetic vision described in Is 58 and 61 are eschatologically presented in the Beatitudes in Lk 6:20–26 as well. More important is that the poor and needy are those for whom the message of Lk 4:18–19 (Is 58:6; 61:1–2) is intended. The proclamation of the acceptable year of the Lord brings reversal of the condition of oppressed and exploited people. The expression of the eschatological Jubilee idea can be found in Lk 4:16–21; 6:20–26; 7:22; 14:7–24. All of these texts include the announcement of God's salvation as well.

Lk 4:16–21 proclaims the concrete Jubilee message and spiritual teaching about the forgiveness of debts and sins. However, its complete realisation will happen at Jesus' second coming. It should be concluded that Jesus Christ uses the old Jubilee tradition in order to inaugurate his public ministry. However, he reshapes and adds something new to that message.

Lk 4:16–21 presents a concrete example of Jesus' preaching in the synagogue. Jesus read from a scroll of the prophet Isaiah 58:6; 61:1–2. It is most likely that Luke uses a version of Isaiah that already combined Is 58:6 and 61:1–2 or he quotes from memory. However, we have found and concluded that Lk 4:16–21 makes some editing and changes to these texts.

Several chiastic structures confirm that Lk 4:16–21 needs to be treated as a unit. Also, a unity of place, time and action in that text shows a literary unity of Lk 4:16–21 as well. The structure of Lk 4:16–21 shows a specific rhetorical form where the climax of the text is placed in the centre of the entire text. The climax of the text is the verses from the book of Isaiah (58:6; 61:1–2). This is a proof that the author used that kind of rhetorical form, showing to his Jewish listeners and readers that Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is anointed as a Messiah and a Prophet who came to announce and bring salvation (Lk 4:18; Is 61:1). He as the anointed One, in his proclamation of God's year of favour, reveals himself as the eschatological prophet like Moses. Jesus is the prophet like Moses who brings an eschatological hope and future restoration of all things in the end times.

In the LXX of Is 58:6 and 61:1 the word ἄφεσις indicates that the laws of Jubilee and Sabbath year (Exod 23:10–11; Lev 25; Deut 15:1–18) are an important background for Lk 4. This word refers to remission of financial debts, forgiveness from sins and freedom from captivity. For Luke, forgiveness of sins is closely connected with the socio-economic ministry of proclaiming good news to the poor. The idea of Jubilee year in Lk 4 and Is 61 refers to the year of Jubilee described in Lev 25. Is 58 and 61 intensify the socio-economic and political implications of Jesus' message of freedom and release in Lk 4.

The phrase in Lk 4 'to bring good news to the poor' refers to the new socio-economic order, which includes transformation of the situation of all indebted, landless, enslaved and unemployed. Luke, in the context of Jesus' proclamation of his public ministry, talks about the poor (Lk 4:18). The poor were all those who were at the bottom of the economic scale suffering for survival. They were the members of the community who suffered exploitation by the rich. The phrase 'to preach or to bring good news to the poor' refers actually to all those in a desperate need. All of them will act in response openly and honestly to Jesus. Their material deficit is very often closely connected with their spiritual sensitivity, modesty and receptiveness to God's message of good news.

Good news is offered to them because they tend to be the most responsive to it. Contrarily to Nolland's interpretation, we can conclude that the image of Jubilee in Lk 4 means spiritual forgiveness of sins and release of debts (also Lk 1:77; 11:4). Jesus' good news is a proclamation and an invitation. When Luke speaks about the poor, their forgiveness and deliverance may include forgiveness of sins and debts as well. So, forgiveness is closely connected with the socio-economic issues. The good news for the poor comes completely by the coming of God's kingdom in Jesus' person. That coming brings into practise the provisions of the year of God's favour as well.

The message 'to proclaim release to the captives' refers to all those who are in bondage or imprisoned because of their debts. Socio-economic regulations, such as 'let the oppressed go free' and 'recovery of sight to the blind' mean deliverance and freedom from debt slavery, poverty, homelessness, sickness, and moral and spiritual blindness.

Does the message of Lk 4:16–21 intend to enact a year of Jubilee in the same way as it is presented in the legal passages of the Pentateuch or to present it as a phenomenon which should be connected with wider socio-political-economic issues? Hanks correctly answers this question, saying that Jesus' ministry and the institution of the year of Jubilee are interrelated, especially aspects of Jubilee liberation, which are included in Jesus' teaching and activities. "For that reason Jesus combines in his own original way two Scriptures texts (Isaiah 58:6

and 61:1–2) and so proclaims for all to hear that his mission starts the wheels of revolution rolling in the form of the Jubilee Year.” (Hanks 1968, 114).

In both Isaiah texts there is the parallel between the image of Sabbath and Jubilee year. Is 58 describes the meaning of the Sabbath day while Is 61 brings the image of Jubilee. That parallel of the Sabbath and Jubilee imagery is a conceptual link to the Jubilee message of Lk 4. In the background of the message of Is 61 can be found an idea of God's deliverance from the exile. That message of deliverance and freedom parallels the description of the Jubilee year in Lev 25:8–17 when debts are cancelled and slaves are liberated. Accordingly, in the core of Jesus' message we can find the same message of forgiveness and freedom. Is 58 underlines a necessity of social justice towards the needy. Description of an acceptable fast goes in relation with the proper treatment of neighbours. Both chapters 58 and 61 have Jubilee overtones because of their theme of release. The image of Jubilee is described in Sabbath terms. “When Jesus applies the passage to himself, he is saying that the present time is like the message of comfort that Isaiah brought to the nation. In fact, the totality of the deliverance that Isaiah described is now put into motion with Jesus' coming.” (Bock 1994, 406).

Even though Baker talks about the different topics in Lev 25, Is 61 and Lk 4, such as ‘freedom, restoration and rest’ in Lev 25 and ‘the new time of universal restoration’ and ‘new heavens and a new earth’ in Is 61 and Lk 4, it can be concluded that the messianic time has begun by Jesus' saying that the year of God's favour has arrived. Jesus has been sent to proclaim good news to all those who were captives or prisoners, promising that they would gain liberty (Lk 4:18b). The year of favour brings equality in society and gives a second chance to those who have become poor, landless or slaves. One of the main aims of the Jubilee year is to deal with the problem of accumulation of riches in the hands of a few landowners. The Jubilee illustration in Lk 4 combines in itself socio-economic reform, spiritual-moral restoration and transformation and release from sickness and disabilities. The beginning of Jesus' public ministry starts in a time when God shows a great favour to the people. Jesus announces that the year of God's favourable year has come in and with him.

The phrase ‘the year of the Lord's favour’ in Lk 4 refers to the coming of God's kingdom in a new time of everlasting liberty from every kind of exploitation, poverty or oppression. Thus, Lk 4:18–19 refers to the Sabbath and Jubilee year in its specific way. The word ἐν αὐτῷς in Lk 4:19 recalls Lev 25:10 and 61:2 and their message of Jubilee as well. Lk 4 speaks about a radical message of Jubilee referring to unacceptable exploitation and poverty. The year of God's favour brings freedom and wellbeing to the individual and community.

The beginning of Jesus' public ministry brings the new time of salvation and fulfilment of the promises. That time shows also the messianic time of fulfilment. The time of Jubilee refers to personal and communal deliverance through physical and spiritual salvation. Personal transformation comes through forgiveness of sins and debts while communal transformation includes socio-economic reform as well. In Lk 4 the year of God's favour is inaugurated as the eschatological year and the salvation is embodied in the image of Jubilee. With the coming of Jesus Christ into this world, the new messianic time has begun. The prophecies from Is 58:6 and 61:1–2 have been fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Trito-Isaiah's prophecy of the time of Jubilee has been fulfilled in Jesus' time (Is 61; Lk 4:21). Also, Jesus interprets Trito-Isaiah's prophecy not only as the beginning of the messianic time but also as an eschatological event. Jesus as the Anointed Messiah brings a personal and eschatological realisation of the Jubilee message. The year of God's favour is still present and will continue to be until Jesus' second coming. The complete fulfilment of the Jubilee message will be realised by the forgiveness of sins, the acceptable worship of God, the restoration of all created things and Jesus' second coming.

It is obvious that Luke has used some of the Old Testament themes that are connected to the year of Jubilee. The themes such as God's kingdom, the poor, the good news, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, freedom for the oppressed, need to be interpreted and understood in correlation with Lk 4:16–21 and its eschatological vision of Jubilee. Furthermore, the feature of Jubilee in Lk 4:16–21 is important for understanding Jesus as the Messiah because Jesus' public ministry has been formulated and reflected as the fulfilment of Is 58 and 61. Jesus is the one in whom the prophecy is fulfilled, especially when he says 'today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing'. His usage of the word '*today*' reflects the nearness of salvation but also the liberation and the year of God's favour have been inaugurated in the historical occasion of Jesus' public ministry.

The time of 'today' has begun by Jesus' proclamation of the Jubilee and God's eschatological reign. According to the Gospel of Luke, that time continues to run through Jesus' passion, death and resurrection until the time of *parousia*. The eschatological kingdom of God and his salvation are already inaugurated but in itself it has future aspects as well. The message of Jubilee speaks about the eschatological salvation that is presented in Jesus Christ but still has to be awaited.

The Mosaic legislation of the Jubilee/Sabbath year is used, by both the author of Isaiah 61 and—through Isaiah 61—Jesus/Luke, as a *means of describing* the eschatological Age of God that has dawned with the ap-

pearance and activity of Jesus. The Lukan Eschaton certainly has its social features, and these, to be sure, are for Luke apparently *best* described in the Is 61 language of Jubilee; but there must be no attempt to make the jubiliary announcement of Lk 4:16–30 only an event of socio-economic significance, nor should there be any effort to elevate the motifs of Jubilee found therein above the one central theme for, and under, which those jubiliary motifs are descriptively employed to serve—i.e., the announcement of the advent, through the appearance and activity of Jesus, of the *Eschatological Reign of God*.

SLOAN 1977, 173

The Sabbath/Jubilee in Jürgen Moltmann's Theology

This chapter contains the interpretation of the themes of Sabbath and Jubilee in Moltmann's theology. This study uses Moltmann's interpretation of the social doctrine of the Trinity as one of the main foundations dealing with his concept of the biblical Jubilee. The last part of this chapter reveals ongoing project of the actualisation of the biblical Jubilee and its practise of liberation in today's world.

Before we start to deal with Moltmann's interpretation of the themes Sabbath and Jubilee, it is important to mention a short overview of his theology.

1 A Short Overview of Moltmann's Theology

In this short summary of Moltmann's theology we are going to talk about the main influences on his theological thoughts and his several major themes that are directly or indirectly connected with our main theme of biblical Jubilee and its relation with the theme of Sabbath.

Moltmann's theology¹ shows his experimental way of thinking and plenty of ideas. His journey in discovering the truth of and about God² is dialogical always open for unhindered dialogue. According to Moltmann, the truth of God

1 About Moltmann's theological writings see e.g. Bauckham (1995); Matić (2007).

2 "Jürgen Moltmann—who offered his public both beautiful and complex theological melodies ...—started his keynote address at the American Academy of Religion in Chicago (1994) with the following words: 'It is simple, but true, to say that theology has only one, single problem: God. We are theologians for the sake of God. God is our dignity. God is our agony. God is our hope.' But, he asked, who is this God? Both the subject of God's own existence and a passionate lover of the world, he answered. And then, turning from the vision of God to the character of theology, Moltmann continued: 'For me theology springs from a divine passion: that is the open wound of God in one's own life and in the tormented men, women, and children of this world ... But for me theology also springs from God's love for life, the love for life which we experience in the presence of the life-giving Spirit, and which enables us to move beyond our resignation, and begin to love life here and now. These are also Christ's two experiences of God, and because of that they are the foundation of Christian theology too: God's delight and God's pain.'" (Volf 1996a, 112).

cannot be found in theological closed systems and assertive dogmatics because they do not allow creativity and decisions of the individual. For Moltmann, "only in free dialogue that truth can be accepted for the only right and proper reason—namely, that it illuminates and convinces *as truth*." (Moltmann 1981, xiii). For him Christian theology needs to be developed in ecumenical fellowship that goes beyond every denominational, cultural and political restriction. Different kinds of distinctions need to influence each limited identity and each identity needs to invest itself in that ecumenical fellowship (Moltmann 1981, xiv).

From the very beginning of his first major publication *Theology of Hope*,³ Moltmann has focused on the Bible as the main foundation for his theology.⁴ His work has been greatly influenced by his experience of the Second World War, especially when he was a prisoner of war as a captive in England where he began his study of theology and philosophy and also his experience as a pastor in the post war Germany. Moltmann very often underlines his first experience of God's reality as his primary source of his theology when he was a prisoner of war.

Moltmann's teachers, such as Hans Joachim Iwand, Ernest Wolf, Otto Weber and biblical scholars, like Gerhard von Rad, Ernst Zimmerli and Ernst Käsemann, have a big influence on his theology. These scholars draw Moltmann's consideration especially toward the biblical models of history, messianic hope and the kingdom of God. These models can be found in the book *Theology of Hope* and also these models still shape the messianic perspective of Moltmann's theology in these days. Moltmann highlights that the biblical revelation of God⁵ who reveals himself historically can be recognized and known through

3 *Theology of Hope* is a book about the eschatological orientation of the whole of theology. This eschatological direction is closely connected with the Moltmann theological work, in which he has frequently developed particular aspects of eschatology in some detail. Bauckham underlines that only in *The Coming of God* Moltmann has written a systematic eschatology (Bauckham 1998, 103). Furthermore, e.g. Hyde-Price interprets *Theology of Hope* as emerged in its modern version as a response to the social question generated by industrial capitalism (Hyde-Price 2008, 211–218).

4 "In *Theology of Hope* the biblical hermeneutical key is Moltmann model of revelation as a divine word of promise in both the Old and New Testaments. The author builds his exegetical case for this model of divine revelation as promise drawing on recent scholarship by historians of religion and Old Testament theologians, in particular that of Walter Zimmerli and Gerhard von Rad." (McDougall 2005, 33).

5 Regarding this issue McDougall interpreting Moltmann's idea says that "biblical revelation is an eschatological promissory-event; it tells of a coming God, the power of the future, and his still outstanding messianic kingdom" (McDougall 2005, 37).

God's events in history. Throughout his faithfulness to his promises in history, God's identity is revealed as well (Moltmann 1993, 117–118).

Furthermore, Moltmann has studied Bonhoeffer's writings from which he has established his zeal for social ethics and the importance of the Church's participation⁶ in public life. The mechanism that brought together these converging influences and concerns in Moltmann's theology of hope was the work of the Jewish Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch. Bloch's concept of philosophy of hope is one of the main issues Moltmann deal with in his book *Theology of Hope*. Moltmann sees Bloch's writings as a kind of Marxist inheritance of Jewish messianism.⁷ Thus, Marxist and Jewish philosophy of 20th century have important influences on Moltmann's thought as well.

Moltmann was involved in the Christian-Marxist dialogue⁸ and for that he used important thoughts from the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. Also, the Jewish theologians and philosophers, such as Franz Rosenzweig and Abraham Heschel,⁹ have made a huge impact on Moltmann's theology. Furthermore, Moltmann's work has been greatly influenced by Augustine, Luther and Barth.¹⁰ Among other themes, Moltmann explains, follows, criticises and com-

6 About the world in the 21st century and challenges to the churches see e.g. Raiser (1996a, 3–11).

7 "Both Moltmann and Bloch see the biblical symbol of the messianic God and the coming kingdom of God as a medium of hope in history and a catalyst for transformation in human society." (McDougall 2005, 34).

8 "The prerequisite for any future Christian-Marxist dialogue is the recognition of the equality of the dialogue partners. It has often been said that when Christians come to power, they let Marxists know it. Only when they are in the minority do they show openness. But the reverse is also true. When Marxists come to power they let Christians know it, and only when they are in the minority do they show openness. Thus, it is very important to establish the equality of the partners in this dialogue, and to make sure that each takes the other seriously in his or her strengths without ridiculing his or her weaknesses. Naturally, each can display to the other his or her mistakes and misdeeds, but that is not dialogue. That is the last judgment. In a dialogue, therefore, each must be prepared to consider sincerely the answers of the other and to reflect on what he or she considers good in those answers, thereby finding an aid to his or her own thinking." (Moltmann&Volf 1983a, 246).

9 Also Buber, Benjamin, Adorno, Scholem, Löwith, Taubes.

10 "It was Karl Barth, who in his *Ethik* (1928), reminded us that Christian theology is always ethics, that ethics belongs to theology proper precisely because God makes himself responsible for us, and that 'ethics as a theological discipline is the auxiliary science in which an answer is sought in the Word of God to the question of the goodness of human conduct'. It is of little surprise, therefore, that such a commitment is shared by one of Barth's most prolific students, Jürgen Moltmann, whose own articulations concerning

plements Augustine's interpretation of time, Luther's view of the cross and crucified Christ and Barth's description of the finality of the revelation we receive through Christ in the present.

While Moltmann remains a recognisably Protestant theologian writing in the German context, his work has become increasingly open to other tradition and movements: Roman Catholic theology, Orthodox theology, and the liberation theologies of the Third World. His experience of the world-wide church—including the sufferings, the charismatic worship and the political commitment of churches in many parts of the world—has also affected his ecclesiology in particular.

BAUCKHAM 1995, 3

Moltmann's early trilogy includes *Theology of Hope* (1964, engl. transl. 1967), *The Crucified God* (1972, engl. transl. 1974) and *The Church in the Power of the Spirit* (1975, engl. transl. 1977). This trilogy has made a huge contribution to the systematic theology.¹¹ Moltmann in his first book represents Christian eschatology as a doctrine of hope. That hope gives strength for the future to the oppressed and suffering in our days. This hope is an alternative and motivating force behind freedom in the world. Moltmann underlines that eschatology is focused toward the transformation of the present.

In *The Crucified God*, Moltmann speaks about the theological foundation for Christian hope that is the cross of the risen Christ.¹² He explains the cross of

theological ethics remain valuable though, in his own words, 'an unfinished task and an unfulfilled wish' (p. ix)." (Goroncy 2011, 391).

11 See also Bauckham (1995).

12 "*The Crucified God* became controversial in the best sense of the word. It stimulated people to think about suffering and the crucified Christ for themselves. I received strong support from Anglican theologians such as Kenneth Woolcombe and Richard Bauckham, from liberation theologians such as Jon Sobrino and Leonardo Boff, from the Korean Minjung theologian Ahn Byun-Mu, and, to my surprise, also from the Orthodox Romanian theologian Dumitru Staniloae, who found the pain of God included in the concept of the merciful God. Many authors followed me with the titles such as *The God of Weakness* (John Timmer), *The Suffering God* (Charles Ohlrich), *The Passion of God* (W. McWilliams), *God and Human Suffering* (Douglas John Hall), *The Disabled God* (Nancy Eiesland), *La Croix de Dieu* (Jean-Louis Souletie), to mention only a few. Numerous dissertations were written on the topic. But what impressed me most were the many personal letters from people in prisons, hospitals, and basic communities in slums, people who have to live in the 'shadows of the cross,' or in the 'dark night of the soul,' or among the crucified people of this world. People are still coming to me after thirty years, speaking about the personal

Christ through the themes of dialectical love, suffering and solidarity. God is presented as a God who loves in solidarity the whole world in its suffering.¹³ The cross of the risen Christ represents Jesus' death and God's identification with the suffering of the world. The suffering of Christ is connected with the suffering of the world. Moltmann says that God is love because God's being is in suffering and the suffering of human beings is in God's being itself. Human beings need to imitate God and open themselves to suffering and to love (Moltmann 1974, 227, 303).

The Church in the Power of the Spirit is more concerned about ecclesiology and pneumatology. From the cross¹⁴ and resurrection of Jesus derives the Spirit who is preparing for the coming kingdom in which the whole creation will be transformed. That transformation will correspond to the resurrection of Jesus. Accordingly, *the ecclesia* exists between the past history of Jesus and the universal future. For Moltmann, that history of Jesus will be fulfilled in the universal future.

Moltmann's early trilogy characterises three complementary perspectives on theology. They are programmatic in style and content but each of them looks at theology as a whole from one particular perspective. Furthermore, Moltmann's writings after his early trilogy, combines a series of systematic contribution to theology. These main writings include his books such as *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, *God in Creation*, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, *The Spirit of Life*, *The Coming of God*. The most evident new direction of his contribution to theology is his focus on nature and experience.

In order to understand Moltmann's theology we must take into consideration both the exegetical foundation and the systematic interpretation of his position, which he proposes as a contemporary theological understanding. For Moltmann it is very important to make an exegetical investigation for any proposal dealing with the matter of Christian doctrine. For example, Moltmann underlines that the reality of God can only be understood and recognised in terms of the Word of God (Morse 1979, 78).

One of the central themes of Moltmann's theology is an eschatological hope for the coming of kingdom of God. God exists in his kingdom that will fulfil his creation with its majesty (Moltmann 1999, 221). Classical eschatology has

consolation they found in this book. When they cried out to God, they found the suffering God at their side." (Moltmann 2006, 133–134).

13 Moltmann criticises the teachings of Metz and Rahner, that God must not suffer, and Küng's and Loyola's statement: 'Deus simpliciter major', the always-greater God (Moltmann 2006, 134–136).

14 About readings on the meaning of the cross today see e.g. Trelstad (2006).

a tendency to be disconnected from the rest of theology. The most acceptable traditional definition of eschatology is the doctrine of last things. Moltmann's eschatology refers not only to 'last things' but also to present and past things too.¹⁵ However, Moltmann goes against that definition on last things by asking the question why theologians did not pay more attention to Jesus Christ's cross and his resurrection as they reflected on 'last things'. Also, Moltmann wants to underline an importance of connecting eschatology and its influence in the present. Accordingly, Moltmann does not speak about eschatology in the terms of last things but rather speaks about eschatology as a doctrine of Christian hope or faith. Eschatology, according to Moltmann, must be recognised as a fundamental dimension of the Christian faith.¹⁶

For Moltmann, theology is imagination for the kingdom of God in the world and for the world in God's kingdom. Moltmann talks about the kingdom, which we may call 'the kingdom of God as countersystem' or 'the subversive kingdom'.¹⁷ The passion for God's kingdom, which has been developed in the Messiah-Jesus' community of faithful, brings that imagination for the kingdom of God. Moltmann takes into consideration what the word 'messianic' meant for Judaism while he thinks of Jesus as the Messiah.¹⁸ According to Moltmann,

15 For Moltmann the idea of the coming God and the advent concept of time are important categories for eschatology. See Moltmann (1996, 26).

16 Also, Moltmann speaks about different perspectives of eschatology, such as individual and universal eschatology, the eschatology of history and the eschatology of nature (Moltmann 1996, xi, xiv). Moltmann explains personal eschatology with the theme of eternal life, historical eschatology with the topic of God's kingdom, cosmic eschatology with the theme of new heaven and new earth and divine eschatology with the idea of glory.

17 Snyder's book *Models of the Kingdom* explores the meaning of the Gospel through the various interpretations and understanding of 'kingdom of God'. He examines different conceptions of the kingdom of God throughout eight models of the kingdom. His approach in dealing with the kingdom of God is biblical, theological and historical exposition of the kingdom. Snyder finds models as a useful methodology for clarifying the theme of the kingdom of God. The models are:

1. The kingdom as future hope: the future kingdom
2. The kingdom as inner spiritual experience: the interior kingdom
3. The kingdom as mystical communion: the heavenly kingdom
4. The kingdom as institutional church: the ecclesiastical kingdom
5. The kingdom as counter system: the subversive kingdom
6. The kingdom as political state: the theocratic kingdom
7. The kingdom as Christianised culture: the transforming kingdom
8. The kingdom as earthly utopia: the utopian kingdom. See Snyder (2001).

18 See e.g. Moltmann (1990, 1996, 1, xiv).

Jesus' life and person can be correctly understood throughout the biblical prophetic promises and witnesses and through his Jewish heritage.

Jesus' social context, his actions and relationships with people are important for making connections between Jesus and the kingdom of God. Jesus was empowered by the Holy Spirit to come and proclaim the kingdom of God. Theology is a theology of God's kingdom based on the person, public ministry and history of Jesus Christ recognised through the experience of the Holy Spirit.¹⁹

It is obvious that Moltmann interprets the kingdom of God in a close correlation with the person of Jesus and his actions. He finds Christ's eschatological nature by examination of the person of Jesus and his public ministry. Jesus embodies the kingdom of God and brings it near.

Therefore, for Moltmann the person of Jesus Christ is crucial for a proper perception of the kingdom of God. He interprets the kingdom of God throughout Jesus Christ's life, public ministry, crucifixion and resurrection. In that context Jesus is always Messiah of God. In *The way of Jesus Christ*, Moltmann describes Jesus Christ as a divine person throughout his messianic ministry. Jesus is the Messiah on the way but also the Messiah in his becoming (Moltmann 1990, 139). Jesus' public ministry was the messianic ministry as well. Accordingly, we may conclude that for Moltmann an eschatological interpretation and understanding of Jesus' life, public ministry, death on the cross and resurrection, are very important.

2 The Sabbath in Moltmann's Theology

This chapter speaks about Moltmann's interpretation of the Sabbath. In the following, it will be shown that the Old Testament concept of Sabbath based on the creation story is very important for Moltmann's theology. Also, his interpretation of the biblical Jubilee is closely connected with his understanding of the Sabbath. Before we start with Moltmann's interpretation of biblical Jubilee we will consider his understanding and explanation of the Sabbath command-

19 The person and work of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity is Moltmann's main theme in *The Spirit of Life*. For Moltmann, theology is capable to refer on the experience of God in all things and the occurrence of all things in God only on the foundation of the experience of the Holy Spirit. He defines the experience of the Holy Spirit as "an awareness of God, in, with, and beneath the experience of life, which gives us assurance of God's fellowship, friendship and love". (Moltmann 1992, 17). The experience of suffering is a part of life in the Holy Spirit.

ment, Sabbath and God's ecology, Sabbath as a crown of creation, Sabbath as a holy time, the concept of redemption and Sabbath and *Shekhinah*.

2.1 *The Sabbath Commandment*

The Deuteronomistic type of the Sabbath commandment in Deut 5:15 says: "Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day." The main purpose for keeping the Sabbath day is connected with the remembrance of Exodus and God's miraculous deliverance from slavery. When God's people were on their way from Egypt to the Promised Land, God accompanied them. God delivered them from their slavery and lead them throughout the desert toward the Promised Land. God freed and sanctified his people (Moltmann 1997, 46).

The freedom of servants and their rest on the Sabbath day reflect their connection with the deliverance of the people from the slavery in Egypt. The story of Exodus and the Sabbath day are two main images of liberation for God's people. The Exodus mirrors the image of external liberty whether the Sabbath day reflects the image of internal liberty. The Sabbath day is the fundamental experience of the presence of God in his creation. However, the Exodus reveals God who takes action among his people in God's history. The human freedom from the exploitation and oppression is intertwined with the cessation of all creative labour. Living beings can find their rest in the rest and peace of the Sabbath day in the presence of God only through their liberation from repression, cruelty and domination. The Exodus and Sabbath go together as the supplements of one another (Moltmann 1985, 287).

There is interrelation between the freedom among the people, the freedom that is established by God's decree and the freedom from the Egyptian slavery.²⁰ The people see and experience the feast of creation as the feast of deliverance in the Sabbath day too (Rosenzweig 1985, 317). Furthermore, in the apocalyptic conception, the Exodus story has been interpreted as the redemption of God's

20 Moltmann mentions the exodus story, which is for him the motif of liberations for the black slaves, the oppressed, the exploited women and children around the world, mostly in Latin America. He underlines also the importance for the social justice between the wealthy countries and the countries of the Third World in our present day. Without social justice there is no peace and liberation of human beings and nature too. Nature and all living beings should be equally treated because the ecological crisis in the present time is also a crisis of technology and science. (Moltmann 1996, 171, 211).

chosen people for the kingdom of Messiah and as the annihilation of violence of powers such as Egypt, Babylon and Rome (Moltmann 1996, 171).

The Priestly version says the following: “Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it.” (Exod 20:8–11). This version is more focused on the creation story and an importance of keeping the Sabbath day (Moltmann 1978a, 75–76).

On the seventh day God rested from creation activity and he sanctified that day. On the seventh day, people should not work and intervene in the nature because the nature itself needs to have rest. Everyone needs to sanctify the Sabbath day too. The Sabbath day is sanctified not through labour and creativity but through fellowship and joy in existence as God’s creatures. On the list of participants who needs to keep the Sabbath day are involved animals, servants and strangers as well. This is the day when everyone needs to celebrate and enjoy together. Through the cessation from the work, nature should be perceived as God’s creation and thus, it needs to be respected and have its own rest too. Every week on the seventh day God’s creation is celebrated and regenerated (Moltmann 1985, 277, 289).

Moltmann sees in these two types of the Sabbath commandment only one common perspective. This is a single view of the exodus tradition and creation story. For him, God who creates the world is one the same God who delivered his people from the Egyptian slavery. The God Creator of this world is also the God Deliverer, i.e. the God of the exodus (Moltmann 1985, 285). In the Sabbath commandment, Moltmann sees the importance of remembrance. The remembrance is connected with God’s eternal Sabbath of creation and in order to enjoy that eternal Sabbath is necessary to keep and sanctify the weekly Sabbath day.

2.2 *The Sabbath and God’s Ecology*

It is necessary to consider the meaning of Sabbath-keeping in order to recognise how Trinitarian theology shapes the community of the faithful (McDougall 2003, 198). The legislations regarding the Sabbath day, the Sabbath year and the Jubilee year set a clear perimeter to the history of human labour, for the well-being of nature and human’s body and soul. “We find contemplative rest not just by turning inwards and analysing our soul. We find it too if we deal wisely with our time, which we must interrupt on the Sabbath if time is not to devour

us entirely. God does not merely inhabit the depths of our being. He dwells in time too." (Moltmann 1999, 78).

Keeping the Sabbath day and the Sabbath of the earth will produce people's salvation and salvation of the land. The Sabbath legislations refer toward the values of growth and harmony with nature (Moltmann 1999, 116). "Biblical creation ethics is essentially Sabbath ethics, for the Sabbath is the law of creation" (Moltmann 1989, 62). The covenant between God and his land comprises the legislation of the Sabbath year of the land. If people observe the Sabbath of the land they will stay in that land and enjoy in its products but if they fail to observe the Sabbath of the land then they will be deported out of the land in order to give that land its time of rest. Moltmann calls that a 'piece of deep ecological wisdom' (Moltmann 1989, 64). Sabbath legislations give a plan to guard and keep the life that God has made. God's creation, especially the land, can be use only in solidarity.

Those who recognise and believe in God in the history of Israel or in the history of Christ as their God and Lord recognise his activity everywhere. Those who have experienced God as love in faith will find the demonstrations of this divine love in all created beings. Those who know the name of God will discover the wisdom and the beauty of God in all his works. The knowledge of God in nature is no saying way to God. True 'natural theology' is simply a recognition of the God who has revealed himself and whom one trusts. Therefore, 'natural theology' does not make anyone blessed, but it can make people wise in their dealings with nature ...

MOLTSMANN 1989, 77

For Moltmann the wisdom of the Sabbath and the Sabbatical year is God's ecological²¹ wisdom (Moltmann 1990, 310). The main purpose of Jesus Christ's rule over the whole world is the glorification of God through his new creation. All creation will be healed in the final intention of Christ's history in order to participate in God's glory.

Furthermore, Moltmann argues that Christ's sufferings, justice and righteousness are relevant for the whole creation. He goes further in making connections between Christ's sufferings and the sufferings of nature and "where dying nature is concerned, 'Christ's sufferings' are surely to be discerned as birth pangs of a new earth on which righteousness will dwell." (Moltmann 1990, 194).

21 About a common earth religion from an ecological perspective see Moltmann (2011, 16–24).

Moltmann here, following the orthodox theology,²² talks about God's beauty, which has a redeeming power. Also, he talks that the relationships between human beings and nature must be established on the foundation of justice because only justice can create peace. Peace between human beings and nature brings their survival. Human beings are invited to become reconciled with nature. They need to allow animals, plants and the land to have their rights because the whole community of creation must be recognised as a community based on legislation in the covenant of God's creation. That legislation contains mainly the laws about the Sabbath in the Old Testament (Moltmann 1990, 255, 307–309).

Also, Moltmann underlines that the world of nature carrying the prints of the Triune God (Moltmann 1985, 64). The Triune God is the self-giving God on the cross but also this God will glorify all creation in the everlasting Trinitarian life. Moltmann interprets salvation in messianic and socio-economic Trinitarian categories. He follows a concept of salvation as *theosis* or deification from the Orthodox theology (McDougall 2005, 130). That kind of salvation is interpreted as a gradual development of transfiguration and glorification into a new creation (Moltmann 1985, 229). Salvation is a messianic process in which human beings are accepted into the fellowship of divine relationships. That fellowship becomes the indwelling of the new creation. The process of restoration starts in and through the Trinitarian fellowship (McDougall 2005, 158) and human beings.

Moltmann tries to make a link between all human beings and nature with the help of the living God who is the Creator and Provider for his creatures. For Moltmann, one of the main questions here is the relation between the creation and God in this contemporary world. For him, the heaven and the earth are God's creation. In the heaven creation is relatively transcendent while on the earth is relatively immanent. Accordingly, the whole creation has in itself the dialectical formation of transcendence and immanence (Moltmann 1985, 182).

Furthermore, the doctrine of creation is an ecological doctrine. This ecological doctrine is closely connected with the doctrine of Sabbath. Moltmann makes a connection between the story of creation and God's creative work with the Sabbath celebration. The whole of God's creation needs to culminate in the celebration of Sabbath day. According to Moltmann, the main centre of the doctrine of creation is the Sabbath. Furthermore, Moltmann speaks about an

22 Moltmann develops his pneumatology, which is influenced by Orthodox theology. He emphasises "the transfigurative work of the Spirit, which creates the possibility for humankind's intimate fellowship with God." (McDougall 2005, 63).

importance to recognise the Sabbath of the earth as God's ecology and strategy to preserve the life that God has created.²³

According to the creation narrative, the Creator 'fulfilled' creation by celebrating a world Sabbath. God "rested" from the work of creation (Gen 2:3). Through resting presence, God blessed creation. God acted no more, but God was fully present. This divine Sabbath, not the creation of humanity, is the true "crown of creation." Rather, humanity is crowned together with all other creatures through the divine "queen Sabbath." Through the Sabbath rest, the creative God reaches the goal of creation, and humans, by their celebration of the Sabbath, perceive and allow nature to be God's creation. The Sabbath is both wise environmental politics and good therapy for ourselves and our restless souls.

MOLTSMANN 1991, 122

Furthermore, Moltmann speaks about the Sabbath feast. In this Sabbath feast we may discover the future of God's creation when God himself will dwell entirely in his creation. God will permit all living beings to participate in the wholeness of his eternal life. "Jesus abolished the separation between the cultic and the profane, the pure and the impure, Sabbath and everyday. He did this however, not in favour of everyday secularity but in favour of the messianic festiveness of the whole of life. If his mission is messianic, then with him the Sabbath of the end-time also is the beginning. The whole of life becomes a feast." (Moltmann 1978, 77). Also, the Sabbath gives a foretaste of the kingdom of God's glory in which the people of God will gladly come to their eternal dwelling in God's midst.²⁴

2.3 *The Sabbath as a Crown of Creation*

The creation is completed on the Sabbath day. The Sabbath crowns and discloses the world as God's creation. God created his world out of love for his glory.

²³ About the destruction and healing of the earth see Moltmann (2001, 166–190).

²⁴ Redemption is the ongoing process of creation. In support of this ongoing process of creation, Moltmann underlines the continual connection between the concept of *ruach* in the Old Testament as the source of life in the original act of creation and the concept of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament as the breath of life in the renewal of creation (Moltmann 1985, 67).

... for according to the biblical Jewish and Christian tradition, God created the world for his glory, out of love; and the crown of creation is not the human being; it is the Sabbath. It is true that, as the image of God, the human being has his special position in creation. But he stands together with all other earthly and heavenly beings in the same hymn of praise of God's glory, and in the enjoyment of God's Sabbath pleasure over creation, as he saw it was good.

MOLTMANN 1985, 31

It is only possible to recognise the world as God's creation through a proper understanding of the Sabbath (French 1988, 78–86). The world as nature does not recognise the world as God's creation because nature has only its seasons in a specific period of time. If we look at the priestly report about the creation story (Gen 1:31; 2:2), it is clear that each day has its night except the Sabbath day (Moltmann 1985, 277). Also, God created everything in pairs, such as day and night, man and woman, heaven and earth but only the Sabbath does not have its pair. Thus, the old Jewish saying mentions that the Sabbath day relates and blesses all six days of creation (Moltmann 1985, 283). Because the Sabbath day does not have a night in the story of creation, that day becomes the feast without end.

Moltmann has developed his Sabbath theology mainly on Rosenzweig's interpretation of Sabbath. Rosenzweig interprets the seventh day as the day of rest, the day of celebration of the memorial of the labour of creation and the completion of the work when the heaven and the earth were created and all other creatures. The Sabbath day was established mainly to commemorate the work of creation. Also the seventh day mirrors the whole creation in the year. Keeping and celebrating Sabbath day week after week throughout a year makes that year a sacred year. The Sabbath day was the symbol of creation, the first God's revelation and the anticipation of redemption.

The year, all of life, is built up on the shift from the holy to the profane, from the seventh to the first day, from perfection to outset, from old age to early youth. The Sabbath is the dream of perfection, but it is only a dream. Only in its being both does it become the cornerstone of life; only as the festival of perfection does it become the constant renewal of creation.

ROSENZWEIG 1985, 313–314

The completion of creation happens in God's rest and throughout that rest flow the blessing and sanctification of the Sabbath day. God's rest is completed throughout his blessing while his work is done through his sanctification of the

Sabbath day. On the Sabbath day God is present in the existence of his creation and whole creation exists in God's presence too (Moltmann 1985, 278–279). Hence, the weekly Sabbath day makes the feast of creation present in God's rest where all creation may find its rest too (Moltmann 1990, 27). The created world lives and exists with and before God. God rests *from, in face of* and *in* his works because he is imminent and present in his creation. Throughout his rest creation is capable to experience God's wisdom and strength and God himself. God's eternal presence is connected with his temporal creation throughout his rest on the Sabbath (Moltmann 1985, 279, 282).

On the seventh day God took pleasure in his creation, which was very good. God's rest does not mean rest after hard work but it is the goal of God's creating.²⁵ God's dwelling among his creation is the internal secret of that creation in the same way as God's rest is the inner mystery of the Sabbath of creation. The keeping of the Sabbath brings the peace of the Sabbath and peace with God to all human beings, families, peoples, animals, creation of heaven and earth. Also, the experience of the Sabbath encompasses peace with nature too (Moltmann 1985, xii, 277). Peace means arriving at rest, and brings harmony within ourselves and with God.

God's creative work can be seen on his creation and he himself is revealed on the Sabbath. After six working days, human beings together with animals need to find rest and recover their strength. Also nature needs to have its own rest and needs to be seen again as God's creation. The rhythm of times reflects also the pulse of earthly life labelled by work and rest.²⁶ The rhythm of work and rest reflects the beat of life and the spirituality of life (Moltmann 1997, 82). Moltmann here follows Heschel's interpretation of Sabbath:

25 See e.g. Frankel (2011).

26 "The weekly Sabbath and the recurring Sabbath years are the biblical foundations for the spirituality of the body and the spirituality of the earth, without which there can be no spirituality of the soul that gives health and life. After six days of work, human beings and animals are meant to find rest, and are not to intervene in nature, so that everything can recover its strength, and so that nature may again be seen and acknowledged as God's creation. The pulse of life is found in the rhythms of the times and in the alternation between work and rest. Mind and soul must cease to be concentrated on will and reason, and must relax their tension. On this day of rest, the Spirit can again return to the body, which it had made its instrument during the working days. According to the biblical understanding, the holy of holies of God's silent presence is not to be discovered in a separated space, either an outward space on earth, or the inward space of the soul. It is to be found in the Sabbath rhythm of the times." (Moltmann 1992, 96).

On the Sabbath we especially care for the seed of eternity planted in the soul. We need relaxation, because we cannot work continuously—stagirite—gaining strength for new efforts. The Sabbath is a day for the sake of life. The Sabbath is the end of the creation of heaven and earth. It is the climax of living.

HESCHEL 1951, 13–14

Consequently, in the keeping of the Sabbath rest, human beings may foretaste the eternal feast of God's glory. In God's rest on the Sabbath of creation is also present his eternal glory and the kingdom of glory. Creation is created for the Sabbath, so the crown of creation is the Sabbath day and the main purpose for human beings during the feast of creation is to praise and glorify infinite and eternal God because human beings are created for the divine glory (Moltmann 1985, 197, 280). God called his creation into existence and at the same time he manifested himself throughout its being. God Creator lives in his creation from his creative power. The Sabbath day reveals itself as the existence and rhythm of eternity in time and also as the presence in history and the foretaste of the coming world of glory (Moltmann 1985, 276–287).

2.4 *The Sabbath as a Holy Time*

When God has finished with his creative activity, he blessed the seventh day (Gen 2:3), i.e. he blessed a time through his rest not through his work. That blessed day becomes a blessing for all God's creation who keeps that day (Moltmann 1985, 281–282). The Sabbath involves all God's creatures with God's rest and grace of his presence to receive the Sabbath blessing. Moltmann here also follows Heschel's interpretation of the Sabbath.

There is a realm of time where the goal is not to have but to be, not to own but to give, not to control but to share, not to subdue but to be in accord. We know what to do with space but do not know what to do about time, except to make it subservient to space. We cannot conquer time through space. We can only master time in time. The higher goal of spiritual living is to face sacred moments ... We create sanctity. Sabbath renews the soul and we discover who we are. God is in moments of time.

HESCHEL 2005, 5–6, 14

This Sabbath sacred time is given to all living beings and all creation may enjoy and experience the sanctified Sabbath day. The Sabbath day is the basic formation of creation and the most sacred time for the Israelites because the Sabbath day was the first thing that God hallowed. According to Moltmann,

the order of sanctification goes: Holy is God and his Name, sanctified are the Sabbath day, God's people, and the land (Moltmann 1985, 283–285).

Furthermore, Moltmann is following Augustine's way of interpretation of time.²⁷ Augustine said that time only happens if creation happens too. The world is created with a time and time is part of that created creation. "You are the Maker of all time, and before all time You are, nor was there ever a time when there was no time! At no time then had You not made anything, for time itself You made." (Augustine 2006, 242)

Time is created time, i.e. God created time with his other created beings. Creation needs to be seen in the context of time as a temporal creation. Moltmann is following here Augustine's interpretation that time was created time together with the whole God's creation too. But furthermore, he is more concerned should we understand created time in terms of time or in terms of eternity. He says that the end time²⁸ must be simultaneous toward all the times and thus only God can be the everlasting end of all times. Created time will be an endless period of creation and created space will become the cosmic sanctuary for God's residence. At the end the whole God's creation will enter into the kingdom of God's glory. 'The last day' will be followed by the eternity without end. The worldly time will be changed into the aeon of righteousness (Moltmann 1990, 328–330).

Augustine interpreted three different tenses of time. The first tense of time is the present past (PrP), which is connected with memory. The second mode of time, which is connected with vision, is the present present (PrPr) and the third one is the present future (PrF) connected with expectation. For him exists three times, a present time of past things, a present of present things and a present of future things. However, only what is present now exists because past and future cannot subsist. (Augustine, 2006, chapter XI, esp. 20). The linear concept of time recognises only quantitative difference between past and future, which both have the same temporal line. It does not see any qualitative difference between them. The linear understanding of time is not an eschatological category but it is a scientific category. The eschatological category of time makes some qualification of past and future. The past holds finished and unfinished, done and undone, realised and unrealised events and experiences. According to Moltmann, future is in the past and past is in the future (Moltmann 1996, 138–140).

²⁷ See e.g. Moltmann (1985, 108, 113–114).

²⁸ About the end of time see e.g. Peters and Urban (2004); Ratzinger (2004, 4–25).

Moltmann accepts the combination of linear and cyclical temporal concepts in his interpretation of time because he is aware that interpretation of linear time may contain only certain events. Through the remembrance of historical events and God in history, God of the past determines the present too. In the temporal sense, the present time can also mean the present of the past time through the notion of remembrance and the present of the future throughout the notion of expectation (Moltmann 1992, 39). What is specific about the Sabbath, Moltmann says:

... on the one hand, *the remembrance* of God's eternal Sabbath of creation, from which the command to sanctify the Sabbath springs; and, on the other, *the promise* of the eternal Sabbath of the messianic era. This means that though, formally speaking, the Sabbath belongs to the cycle of human time, its nature allows it to break through the cyclical rebirth of natural time by prefiguring the messianic time. The Sabbath is part of the cycle of the week, and yet, by virtue of the promise which, in the mode of anticipation, it already fulfils, it is the sign of the coming freedom from time's cyclical course. The Sabbath stands in time, but it is more than time, for it both veils and discloses an eternal surplus of meaning.

MOLTMANN 1985, 286

The Sabbath is seen beyond the day itself and is connected with the eternity in time and the future of God's glory.

Moltmann mentions different notions of time in the biblical traditions:

- a) *Time and the event.* The time is determined by the concrete moment or event because every event needs to happen in time.
- b) *Historical time* reflects upon the promises of God and their fulfilment throughout the events of faithfulness of God.
- c) *Messianic time* refers toward the coming of the Messiah.
- d) *Eschatological time* is concerned by the universal fulfilment of promises.
- e) *Eternal time* is the time of the new everlasting creation in the kingdom of God's glory.

MOLTMANN 1985, 124

Also he speaks about the double form of time in God's creation: the time of earthly creation and the aeonic or heavenly time. In the beginning God created heaven and earth (Gen 1:1) and he created the time and that was also the beginning of time of earthly creation. "And there was evening and there was

morning, the first day" (Gen 1:5b) (Moltmann 1996, 282–283). All earthly events are temporal and irreversible. For the earthly creation there is a transitory, temporal time. Temporal time is not the time of coming aeon but it is the earthly time. With the chronological time is not possible to measure the end of time (Moltmann 1990, 158).

The time of promise is the time of earthly creation that is created for the dwelling of the Creator. When that creation becomes God's home then creation will be completely finished. The Sabbath day indicates towards that completion. However, heaven and its dwelling beings have an aeonic time that corresponds to God's infinity. The aeonic eternity of the world of heaven and the earthly time are connected because earthly creation belongs to the context of the aeonic time. Earthly life in present time is touched by eternal life and thus becomes prelude for eternal life itself (Moltmann 1996, 283, 292). Through the fulfilment of time, the earthly creation will depart from the time and will enter into the aeon of God's glory through the annihilation of death and resurrection of the dead. All times will be changed and transformed throughout the restoration of all things.²⁹ That transfigured and gathered times will become the aeon of the new creation and 'the Last Day' will be the beginning of eternity. The space of creation will be transformed into the dwelling of omnipresence of God. The time of creation will be changed into the time of eternity (Moltmann 1996, 294–296).

Time for God's people is defined, recognised and experienced by certain happenings. Thus, the history of the promise was important for their interpretation of time. According to Moltmann, God revealed himself to the Israelites in his promises.³⁰ For example, the Exodus story is an event that initiates history

29 See e.g. Bauckham (1998, 104).

30 Moltmann gives several definitions and explanations of the word *promise*:

- a) A promise is a kind of announcement about the coming of a reality that does not yet exist.
- b) A promise helps man to make connection between his own history and the future. Through that binding man will get a sense for history.
- c) The word of promise combines the past and the future events and gives them the meaning.
- d) The word of promise gives freedom to man to accept or not to accept the promise. The promise may bring something completely new in its fulfilment and God is the main subject of the fulfilment of the promise.
- e) The specific character of the Old Testament promises may be seen in the fact that the promises and their experiences were again perpetually interpreted. Furthermore, God is always superior toward the promises and their experiences. The fulfilment of the promises not yet completely corresponds with reality. There is still something

because in that event God established his covenant with his people. History of the Israelites is determined by God's events and his presence among them. Only God made connection between the various disconnected happenings and established their sequence in time. The history of God's promises should not be seen as a history with systematic and order sequence. It can be only seen as a narrative concept that makes the past present for the purpose of proclamation the future (Moltmann 1985, 118–120).

Moltmann was influenced by Rosenzweig's book *The Star of Redemption* and his idea of promise and fulfilment. Rosenzweig said that promise is unfinished and movable whether fulfilment materialises promise. The substance of the promise and the fulfilment are the same and there is no change on the way from promise to its fulfilment. However, the final product is transformed and become beginning again: "... only what was finished thus transformed itself into a beginning. Therewith, however, the constituent pieces which produce the finished product are transformed into predictions of the process which emerges out of the finished product become beginning again." (Rosenzweig 1985, 112).

Moltmann underlines the importance of traditional history of God's promises given to Israel for the future of the whole world. He was influenced by von Rad and his interpretation of the Old Testament theology.³¹ Following von Rad, he found out that the process of the history and an event of tradition should be seen between promise and fulfilment. He finds different kind of intermediate connections between promises and their fulfilment, such as exposition, development, confirmation, restoration and affirmation. For him, God's promises are not already completely fulfilled in the history of his people. But the experienced historical events also give a foretaste to the fulfilment of the promised future (Moltmann 1993, 108).

Each new coming generation received the promise from the past generation. Each generation interpreted the promise in its own way and exposed that promise toward the promised future. Not only that each generation interpreted and passed the promise toward the future but they were hopefully and obediently opened toward the future promise (Moltmann 1967, 112). When each generation had remembered the different events of the former generations,

more which may come from that fulfilment. Thus, the fulfilment of the promises may be understood also as explanations, affirmations, expositions and expansions of the promises. (Moltmann 1967, 103–105).

31 See von Rad (1962; 1965).

such as the events of the exodus or the settlement in Canaan where God was present and active among his people, then they were aware of a historical past.

The former generations received and experienced in history God's promises and acts of his love and faithfulness.³² God's actions in the life of his people in the past determine their future too. Israelites' history was made through God's accompany. Only when God had revealed himself to his people in his word or acts than the history of Israelites existed.³³ "Promises are transmitted, events of God's faithfulness are recounted, all pointing to the future which is announced and promised increasingly dominates the present. This tradition of promise turns our eyes not towards some primeval, original event, but towards the future and finally towards an eschaton of fulfilment." (Moltmann 1967, 298).

History is the reality that is formed by promise. For the Christians it is made known in the happening of promise constituted by Christ and his cross and resurrection. God will bring his universal fulfilment of his redeeming acts and his promises whose history they relay (Moltmann 1967, 224–225, 283). Whoever accepts the promises, that person is in a covenantal relationship with God. Furthermore, God's commandments are intertwined with the promise and they have been making history. Both of them are open toward the future. Their common aim is to bring dignity to men through their fellowship with God who gives promises (Moltmann 1967, 121–122).

Eschatology has its foundation on God's promises too.³⁴ God gave a promise and confirmation that he will fulfil his promise in his faithfulness. The crucial promise in the Old Testament is the promise given to the Israelites: "I will be your God and you will be my people." This is the confirmation of God's self-determination and choosing the Israelites as God's own people. God gave a promise to be with his people. It is important to look forward in the direction of God's future but also from the future toward our present time.³⁵ Then it is possible to discover and experience more from the words of promises. Living hope comes from the revelation of God and his faithfulness to his promises. Jesus revealed himself as the risen Lord and through his Easter appearances he showed what he really *was, is* and *will be*. His revelation also assumes a promise

32 About God and the powers of the common life see e.g. Stackhouse and Paris (2001).

33 See e.g. von Rad (1960; 1963).

34 We can find three main theological concepts in *Theology of hope* that define eschatology: a) acceptance of God's promises; b) understanding Jesus' resurrection as promise; c) understanding history as mission. Moltmann's interprets the Old Testament story as the history of God's endless promises of future. Eschatology is based on promises. See also Bauckham (2008, 12).

35 About liberating and anticipating the future see also Moltmann (1999a, 189–208).

of his own future glory and his lordship. His future is present in promises and it is also in fulfilment of some promises (Moltmann 1993, 85–88).

God's history with his world and the history of the world began with God on and with the Sabbath of creation. Throughout the rest of Sabbath, the Sabbath becomes the crown of history, and history is sanctified by God and humanity. Without the keeping Sabbath rest, history turns into the self-destruction of all humankind (Moltmann 1985, 139, 279).

According to Moltmann, lifetime is ordered rhythmically. Accordingly, the times of history cannot be seen in a linear sense except in working and mechanical time that aiming for some purpose and aspiration. Every living creature experiences in its life time the rhythm of its inward and outward activities or experiences with some pressure or relaxation (Moltmann 1996, 138).

For the people of God, the common eschatological expectation of the future³⁶ could be experienced in their celebrations of the Sabbath day, the Sabbath years and the year of Jubilee. All these holy occasions are closely connected because of their rhythmical order. The rhythm of the Sabbath offers the possibility to experience God's rest, which is the goal of creation and will be the end of history as well.

Time is theologically determined by God's presence or absence and by the different types of his presence in a certain periods of time. Moltmann talks about times of the law, the gospel, the Messiah, the Sabbath of the Lord and eternity (Moltmann 1996, 138, 200). We may agree with Moltmann and make an observation that a time of the law may be recognised in the Sabbath-Jubilee legislations in Leviticus 25,³⁷ a time of the Messiah in Isaiah 61 whether a time of the gospel in Luke 4. The complete realisation of these holy occasions of Sabbath-Jubilee will happen in a time of the Sabbath of the Lord and a time of eternity. Eternity is the fullness of time. Also, a temporal creation will become the new creation of an eternal God's world and will experience transition into eternal life and the eternal kingdom. A temporal creation, which is an open system, will be completely finished in God's Sabbath. The Sabbath makes a connection between the time of the first creation and the world to come (Moltmann 1996, 264–266).

36 About liberating eschatology see e.g. Farley and Jones (1999).

37 "According to Israel's Torah, the earth is also to remain untilled every seventh year, so that it may enjoy a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the Lord (Lev 25&26). In this 'year of release' for the exploited earth, which today is polluted by so many fertilisers, I see a *spirituality of the earth*: the earth rests, celebrating its Sabbath before God, and during this year is not touched by human beings. It comes to itself again and restores its fertility. The land rests and enjoys its peace." (Moltmann 1997, 84).

In the rhythm of the Sabbath, God's rest breaks through the condition of continuous change of time. Furthermore, God's rest as the goal of creation will be the end of history too. About the coming of God, Moltmann interprets God who is already coming towards his creation. With his coming arrives also eternal time and everlasting life, i.e. with the coming of God will begin eternal time and end future time. Rev 1:4 says "Peace to you from him *who is*, and *who was* and *who is to come*". Moltmann says that in the third part, *who is to come*, we should expect rather *who will be*. Thus, the linear time, i.e. past, present, future cannot be found here. Therefore, Moltmann sees God's future already on the move coming to us³⁸ (Moltmann 1996, 23, 26).

Throughout interrelations of intertwined different events is possible to interpret the present as one comes back to the past future in order to understand its own future. Thus, what is moving on in history is the temporal present with its past and future. The eschatological future is the future that reflects all remembered past and experienced and not yet experienced present (Moltmann 1985, 129). Accordingly, through the notion of linear time and the concept of 'now already' and 'not yet' is not possible to understand eschatology because eschatology is simultaneous to all times. The earthly creation has the earthly created time that has an unrepeatable flow but the eternity of the new creation will collect, accomplish and transform time (Moltmann 1996, 6, 280).

Moltmann underlines the importance to understand *eternal time* and *eternal history of God, human beings and nature* first of all because there is not such a thing as timeless eternity and the end of history (Moltmann 1985, 213).

... nothing is loss for God—not the pains of this life, and not its moments of happiness. Men and women will find again with God not only the final moment, but their whole history—but as the reconciled, the rectified and healed and completed history of their whole lives. What is experienced in this life as grace will be consummated in glory.

MOLTSMANN 1996, 70–71

God will completely reveal himself through his glory and all peoples will know his glory. Through the universal revelation of God's glory history will be brought to its fulfilment and completion (Moltmann 1967, 115). Additionally, Moltmann sees and interprets the messianic time as 'endless Sabbath'. The keeping of weekly Sabbath prepares human beings and nature for the coming of the

38 About the beginning of time in God's presence and the truth of theology in freedom see Moltmann (2004, 54–64).

Messiah's time. "The messianic time is God's time—the 'acceptable year of the Lord', as our Bible translates it—the year pleasing to God—the fulfilment of the promises of the prisoners' hope for liberty, the hope for peace cherished by people living in conflict, the hope for God's coming which is the hope of the godforsaken. The messianic time is God's today: today, as we hear the scripture, and as Jesus comes to us." (Moltmann 1983, 73).

Moltmann emphasises that the gospel or good news is the invitation into the freedom of God's messianic time. The messianic time or the 'age of the eternal Sabbath' needs to be recognised in the Sabbath because the Sabbath goes forward to the messianic times. Thus, the Sabbath day also represents the expectation and foretaste of this future time. The Sabbath, also as the Sabbath year and year of Jubilee, stands in the cycle of time but also realises beforehand the victory over time and death (Moltmann 1978a, 38, 76).

Meanwhile, the Sabbath day and the Sabbath years rhythmically interrupt the earthly time.

In the rhythm of the Sabbath interruptions of 'time's flow', earthly creation—human beings, animals and the earth—vibrate in the cosmic liturgy of eternity. The ever-flowing stream of time regenerates itself from the presence of eternity in the Sabbath rhythm of the days, the years, and the seventh years, thus preparing for the messianic Sabbath of the End-time creation and, through that, for the eschatological Sabbath of the eternal creation.

MOLTMANN 1996, 283–284

Moltmann speaks about the Sabbath that reaches forward to the messianic time which is often called the 'age of the eternal Sabbath'. Accordingly, the Sabbath day is recognised as the expectation and foretaste of the future. The Sabbath day offers harmony and peace between and in human beings and nature. The Sabbath's rules are given for humankind's sake. "The fact that 'the blind receive their sight, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up' is actually part of Jesus' messianic mission. According to Luke this begins with the proclamation of the final 'acceptable year of the Lord' through Jesus in Nazareth (Lk 4:18ff.). According to Leviticus 25 this is the 'Sabbatical year', and according to the prophets (Is 61:1ff.) it is the final dawn of the messianic time, in other words, the fulfilment of the weekly Sabbath's anticipations and promises." (Moltmann 1978, 76).

Jewish tradition has made connection between the Sabbath and Messiah. Through the keeping and celebrating the weekly Sabbaths, the Messiah is present too. When the people of God will celebrate a single Sabbath in a proper

way, then the Messiah will come for the Jewish people. The messianic time, as a kind of messianic 'sacrament of time', means celebration of the Sabbath in the community of faithful and among God's creation. The Sabbath may be seen as steady, lasting messianism, which brings the notion of redemption into ordinary life (Moltmann 1990, 27).

2.5 *The Sabbath and the Concept of Redemption*

God created his creation and from the beginning God's creation was good but human sin ruined it. There is an eschatological expectation for redemption and restoration of the whole creation because of sin and its destructiveness. God will completely restore whole his creation and will make the new creation of all things which were, are and will be.

Christian theologians and Jewish scholars³⁹ investigate the theme *redemption from history*. The reason for that is their understanding of the present time as a moment that exceeds from the continuum of the times. Christian theologians comprehend the historical moment as a part of eternity. However, for the Jewish scholars are not possible to accept a partial redemption of this present time or moment in this unredeemed present world. The redemption of the future from the power of history will happen with the coming of Messiah who will end time. Christianity comprehends redemption in the spiritual sense. Redemption happens in the soul of the individual and it is not connected with the redemption of the external world at all. Christians are already reconciled with God in Jesus Christ although they dwell in an unredeemed world.

Moltmann speaks very often about his personal life that has been lived in God's eternal presence and in expectancy of his coming. Moltmann underlines very often the main message of his theology, which is Jesus Christ's work on the cross and the power of his resurrection, because the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the main things for Christianity and theology. The cross of Christ infers that God is present in the midst of human pain and suffering. The resurrection is the most important element for the Christian faith and hope and eschatology needs to have its basic on the resurrection of Christ. The future has been seen in the light of resurrection. Jesus Christ was persecuted, abandoned, humiliated and crucified by the powerful leaders of this world but God raised him from the death bringing the new future for all exploited, abandoned, cursed, broken people. The resurrection of Christ is the promise of the new future for all marginalised, needy and godless people.

39 About redemption or the eternal future of the kingdom see Rosenzweig (1985, 205–253).

Redemption is possible throughout a personal conversion in this still unredeemed world. However, in the new creation our present unredeemed world will be redeemed (Moltmann 1996, 44–46, 104). Christian understanding of the concept of the redemption of the world and the redeemed soul differs from the Jewish view regarding that issue. For the Jews is not acceptable an idea of the redeemed soul without the redemption of the world. That kind of redemption is partial and not truthful for the Jews because redemption from God must involve redemption of the whole world from all evil. For them a concept of redemption is a process that needs to be realised publicly in the visible world.⁴⁰

Moltmann uses rhetoric of ‘has already come’ and ‘has not yet come’ to speak about the redemption of the world. What ‘has already come’ into this world is the Messiah, who is the suffering Christ who heals the wounded, and he is the Lamb of God who has justified the godless and reconciled enemies. The love of God is manifested through his Son. However, the redemption of the world ‘has not yet come’ either the resurrection of the dead, completed reconciliation nor the new creation and the glory of God (Moltmann 1990, 32).

Moltmann speaks about God’s redemption of human beings and nature. Christianity sees that God who is the Creator of his whole creation is also God the Redeemer. God will redeem his creation and he will be one day ‘all in all’ (1 Cor 15:28).⁴¹ Redemption and creation are intertwined and bound together (Moltmann 1996, 259). God’s redemption of human beings means that human beings will be renewed again as God’s image and will be blessings for God’s nature. The redemption of nature means that nature will be renewed as God’s creation and will become home, a dwelling place for human beings. Through the renewal of nature ‘world of the world to come’ is ready to come (Moltmann 1990, 272). God’s creation is opened toward its future through the Sabbath.

40 See e.g. Sholem (1963).

41 “... the bodily solidarity of human beings with the earth and the rest of creation, and the inextricable connectedness of all creation, require that God’s purpose is for the eschatological redemption of his whole creation. This all-embracing vision finds its comprehensive focus in a theocentric insistence that eschatology finally concerns the coming of God (hence the title of the book) to his creation to indwell it. The theocentric goal of creation is also God’s own goal: God fulfils his own desire to come to rest in his creation and creation is brought to completion in the immediate presence of God. Moltmann’s favourite eschatological text has always been the Pauline expectation that ‘God will be all in all,’ which he takes to refer to a mutual indwelling of God and creation, such that creation participates in the eternal life and glory of God, while God is glorified in all of his creation.” (Bauckham 1998, 103–104).

Mainly the whole God's creation was created for the sake of the Sabbath because the Sabbath is the feast of creation and feast of redemption.

According to Moltmann, God's creation from its beginning is adjusted and oriented towards its redemption, i.e. goes forward to the feast of creation, which is the Sabbath (Moltmann 1985, 5–6). Heaven and earth present God's home and on God's endless Sabbath, God will in his rest arrive and dwell in his home. Whole God's creation will enjoy in God's endless abundance. God will be entirely present in the whole creation in his Sabbath rest and the whole creation will become his temple. Also his glory will come too (Moltmann 1990, 290, 302).

God's creation needs to be seen throughout the relationship between God and the world. The whole creation will achieve its completion in its redemption because the world was not created as a complete creation. God's creation is created in a process and it is open to the future because God still creates something new. God communicates and leads forward his creation through his Spirit and his Word. As a result, the created world manifests itself as an everlasting creature. The world as a creature has its relationship with its Creator as a self-revealing appearance. The created world is a determined configuration with the continuous necessity for its renewal (Rosenzweig 1985, 119–121).

For Rosenzweig, redemption as type of the expectation and the complete change is possible at every moment. "... the entire content of the elements cannot join in a single concept such as the concept of creation is in and of itself. As they open up, both elements retain contents which can only go into effect in other directions, in God's case his revealing himself, in the world's case its being redeemed." (Rosenzweig 1985, 139).

Christian hope speaks about Jesus Christ and his life, death, resurrection and future. Christians live with Christ's future of the coming of God's kingdom. Hope in Jesus Christ leads human life toward him. Christ's future is already recognised in his advent and because of that human beings can be ready for the experience of his coming to them in their present situation. Christ's future is comprehended as the future, which is also the present even though does not cease to be the future at the same time. Here Moltmann follows Rosenzweig's idea that eternity is a future and present without stopping to be future, i.e. it is a Today and more than Today (Moltmann 1996, 36).

God will restore completely the whole creation. That will be the universal accomplishment of God's redeeming and saving acts (Moltmann 1967, 229). Eschatology here needs to be understood as the redemption that will run opposite to evolution, i.e. the redemption movement will come from the future to the past. Everything what is past it will be returned in the everlasting aeon of God's new creation of all things (Moltmann 1990, 303). Through that redemp-

tion God's creation will be enabled to take part in God's eternal presence. On that holy day, the worshippers will feel in anticipation that they are already redeemed.⁴² The Sabbath day may be seen as the completion of God's creation and the revelation of God's existence in creation. God's creation and God's revelation will be one in the future and their unity in the future will reveal the redeemed world (Moltmann 1985, 288).

The Sabbath is the festival of redemption, in a double sense in fact, in both its bases: as remembrance of the work of creation, for it celebrates the divine rest of the seventh day, and also as memorial day for the liberation from the Egyptian house of bondage, for its purpose is to let man-servant and maid-servant rest like their master; Creation and revelation merge on the Sabbath in the rest of redemption.

ROSENZWEIG 1985, 359

Moltmann speaks about the social resurrection of this life into a new completed eternal life. After death, human beings will get transformed immortal life in everlasting existence because of the death and resurrection of Christ. From the temporality of this mortal life, the creation will enter into the eternal God's kingdom and eternal life (Moltmann 1996, 71, 77).

Christian hope is all-embracing for the whole God's creation. This is hope primarily for the poor, needy and exploited people because God of hope brings hope to those who suffer any kind of torture or violence. However, this hope is also for all others. According to Moltmann, Christian eschatology presents hope for God's glory, the new creation, the history of human beings and nature, and the resurrection and everlasting life of people.

None of us are given hope just for ourselves. The hope of Christians is always hope for Israel too; the hope of Jews and Christians is always hope for the peoples of the world as well; the hope of the peoples of the world is always also hope for this earth and everything that lives in it. And hope for the whole community of creation is ultimately hope that is Creator and Redeemer will arrive at his goal, and may find in creation his home.

MOLTMANN 1996, xiii

Salvation and restoration of all things are realistic outcomes of the theology of the cross⁴³ and resurrection. However, salvation is waiting for the promised

42 See e.g. Rosenzweig (1985, 314–315).

43 "Moltmann agrees fully with Rahner's contention that the doctrine of the Trinity had

transformation and resurrection of the whole creation, which is possible through Jesus' resurrection. The presence of Jesus constitutes the presence of the kingdom of God but the kingdom of God has the futuristic characteristic as well.⁴⁴ The eschatological future must be awaited as *adventus*. The kingdom of God is coming to the history of our days to contradict it with the eschatological institution of God's righteousness. That kingdom contradicts the present time with the coming future of God's absolute rule through the resurrection of the crucified Christ.

Throughout the redeeming kingdom in the divine judgment all sins and suffering world will be annihilated and whole God's creation will be saved by the transformational renewal of their beings. God's judgment will bring all things to be right and God's kingdom will bring beginning of new life (Moltmann 1996, 251, 255). Justice and righteousness will dwell in the new heaven and the new earth (2Pt 3:13), God will dwell with his creation and in reverse whole creation will become new in a common existence with the

becoming increasingly isolated from salvation history ... In developing a trinitarian theology of the cross, Moltmann set out essentially to rehabilitate the organic connection between the doctrine of the Trinity and soteriology. To this end, he applies Rahner's famous rule to his own trinitarian theology of the cross: 'The economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity, and the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity.' ... the cross-event not only reveals the trinitarian God who is 'for us' but actually constitutes the Trinity.' (McDougall 2005, 46).

- 44 God's *parousia* will include judgement but not condemnation. However, Harvie correctly says that Moltmann is not clear in his explanation of the kingdom of God in connection with Jesus Christ and possible conversion of those who do aggression to the poor. That connection may be seen through God's work of justification of sinners. A sinner needs to repent and accept Jesus as the Son of God. Also, his or her sins are forgiven while the Holy Spirit is engaged in reconciling and redemptive action of that person. With the forgiveness comes a reverence and worship of God. "This work changes the ontological status of the creature from one of fallen sinfulness to new creation, thus enabling the creature to live within a new ethical state commensurate with the eschatological kingdom of God. In this way there is a dialectic of present change and continued awaiting the eschatological consummation in the life of a person." (Harvie 2008, 152). "If the judge of the torturers is called Christ, then these torturers are confronted by someone who has been tortured. That is the movement of truth. The mask falls. The torturer recognizes himself for what he is. That is judgment." (Moltmann 1994, 69). God's righteousness will create justice and bring God's complete rule. God's righteousness is a redemptive righteousness that creates justice. It will not bring rewards and punishments but will put people right and will bring peace (Moltmann 1990, 335).

living God. This renewed creation will become everlasting creation with its deification, according to the orthodox theology.⁴⁵

For Moltmann, in the future the whole God's creation and God's revelation will be united together. That unity will combine the new God's creation and the eternal Sabbath (Moltmann 1985, 288). Moltmann underlines that the process of world reality as history will come to an end. At the end God will be 'all in all'. Christian existence has Christ's future and in him it finds its fulfilment. This world will be transformed into God's kingdom and the new creation.

The Triune God is in the future and evokes the present world into himself. The kingdom of God has its foundation in the coming of God. The coming of God from the future leads the world into God's kingdom. The eschaton means God's coming and his arrival not the future time or timeless eternity. The expectation of God's *parousia*⁴⁶ reflects an advent hope. "The eschatology of the coming God calls to life the history of new human becoming, which is a becoming without any passing away, a becoming into lasting being in the coming presence of God" (Moltmann 1996, 24). In the eschaton, God will indwell in his creation and reveal his glory. The eschaton will be the fulfilment of Christ's reign. The *parousia* is a new beginning when God's kingdom will come in its fullness in the new creation. Moltmann concludes, "in God's creative future end will become the beginning and the true creation is still to come and is ahead of us" (Moltmann 1996, xi).

Moltmann explains that every moment is an atom of eternity. However, Christ's *parousia* will not happen in a moment in time but will be beyond temporal and identical with eternity. Thus, all different category of time will disappear. The *parousia* will bring a complete revelation regarding the meaning of salvation through Christ's death and resurrection and it will demonstrate the fulfilment of Christ's history. The kingdom of God without end will begin with Christ's *parousia* (Moltmann 1990, 317–319).

When the whole earth is full of his glory (Isa 6:3), when God is 'all in all' (1Cor. 15:28) and when God dwells in his whole creation (Rev. 21:3), then creation and revelation are truly one. God is then manifest in the whole creation, and the whole creation is the manifestation and mirror of his glory: that is the redeemed world.

MOLTMANN 1985, 288

45 About deification see also Moltmann (2005, 129–138).

46 Moltmann mentions the two expectations of the *parousia*. The *parousia* of Christ for the church and the *parousia* of the Messiah to all Israel. See Moltmann (1990, 313–341).

2.6 *The Sabbath and Shekhinah*⁴⁷

In Jewish literature the Lord's presence and dwelling are described as the *Shekhinah*, (Hebrew word שכינה) which is a very complex term.⁴⁸ The word itself cannot be found in the Hebrew Scripture. It is derived from the same verb שָׁכַן and describes the divine presence in the world. Heschel calls the Sabbath day 'architecture of time', i.e. the Sabbath is the art of significant form in time.⁴⁹ The Sabbath itself is a sanctuary that we build, a sanctuary in time. It is God's presence in the world open to the soul of human being. That Sabbath has a capacity to embrace us with a tent of God's peace (Heschel 2005, 8, 21–30). It is very often associated with light (e.g. Is 58:8) where the phrases *light-healing* and *righteousness-glory* are connected. Some Jewish philosophers interpret the *Shekhinah* as an 'independent created intermediary', something like the Lord's glory.⁵⁰

In the beginning when God created his creation, only God's Sabbath was hallowed. That sanctification came from the holy God who chose the Sabbath day for his sanctification and he hallowed the seventh day of his creation through his rest. God lives and dwells in time on the Sabbath day. The whole created beings participate in the divine rest in the rhythm of time (Moltmann 1997, 46–47). All the works of God's creation is blessed through God's resting presence among his creation in the hallowed Sabbath day. God created his

47 Or *Shekinah*, *Shechinah*, *Shekina*, *Shechina* or *Schechinah*. Rosenzweig defines *Shekhinah* as God's descent upon man and his sojourn among men. See Rosenzweig (1985, 409ff.). Since 1972, Moltmann has been using the Hebrew term *Shekhinah* for God's presence or dwellings. The *Shekhinah* in history is seen and interpreted by the rabbis as the history of liberation, redemption and fellowship with God. (Moltmann 1996, 304). According to the Jewish tradition, the seventh day was connected with the image of Queen Sabbath who dwells together with the eternal God among his people and all creation. Also, the *Shekhinah* was God's residence in his people in its travelling in the exile of this present world. That image represents also the biblical image for the soul and her spiritual wedding with God. (Moltmann 1997, 83).

48 "There were theological difficulties in reconciling the idea of the localised presence with that of the one God who could be encountered throughout the world: but the concept provides a way of holding that God is both transcendent and immanent, and it became available to Christians who struggled to related their Jewish monotheism with a doctrine of the incarnation of Christ. The concept underlies the doctrine of the Word (John 1:14), the narratives of the Transfiguration (Luke 9:31) and the Ascension (Acts 1:9), and the promise of the presence of Jesus where 'two or three are gathered in my name' (Matt. 18:20) 'to the end of the age' (Matt. 28:20)." (Browning 1997, *shekhinah*).

49 About God's *Shekhinah* Moltmann was influenced by Heschel, Rosenzweig and Scholem.

50 See e.g. Bowker (1997).

creation for the feast of God's Sabbath. Sabbath day is the promise of future completeness of God's creation.

The seventh day of the first creation connects this world with the world to come. At the beginning God's creation had only its beginning and at the end that creation will be completed. In the beginning it was the hallowed Sabbath day, at the end is going to be the eschatological Sabbath or *Shekhinah*. In the beginning the Sabbath day was beginning and promise, at the end God's *Shekhinah* will be completion and fulfilment. God's new creation will also attain and complete the first creation within itself (Moltmann 1996, 265–266). God's rest on the Sabbath of creation and the everlasting rest when God will be entirely present in his creation show the unity of Sabbath and the *Shekhinah*. That unity also means the eternal blessing and everlasting God's peace.

The Sabbath rest with which the Creator blesses his creation is the promise of its consummation in God's eschatological *Shekinah*, a promise built as endowment into creation itself ... As the feast of creation, God's Sabbath rest is the beginning of creation's consummation; God's final *Shekinah* is the completion of that beginning in the 'feast without end' of which Athanasius speaks. The Sabbath is God's *Shekinah* in time. The *Shekinah* is God's Sabbath in space.

MOLTMANN 1996, 283

God's dwelling as the godly secret of creation is the *Shekhinah* and her main purpose is to make God's dwelling place also a place for the whole creation. The infinite God himself will inhabit in his finite creation that will be his own dwelling place. Also, God himself will be the everlasting dwelling place of his creation (Moltmann 1985, xiii, 150). The *Shekhinah* also refers to God's descending and dwelling in a particular space and a particular time in human history among his creation.

The *Shekhinah* is present among the community of faithful and participates in its sufferings, longings, wanderings, joys. Even though, the *Shekhinah* is God's presence but it is not his fundamental omnipresence. It is God's promised presence in this world (Moltmann 1992, 47–48). God has been present among his people, for example as *Shekhinah* of exodus or *Shekhinah* of exile. *Shekhinah* is God's presence that fulfils life with happiness and peace all those who suffer. Furthermore, *Shekhinah* is God's presence in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit as well. Moltmann sees Christian theology of *Shekhinah* as the incarnated God's promise and the presence of the Holy Spirit of the coming God (Moltmann 2008, 97–109). All human beings are invited to live with passion this life and

look forward for God's coming because God will come to dwell in his renewed creation, which will be his dwelling place, i.e. *Shekhinah*.

In history two different presentations for the *Shekhinah* may be found.⁵¹ The first one presents the *Shekhinah* as the one which had descended into the tabernacle and had ascendant from the first sanctuary. That *Shekhinah* is expected to come again at the End-Time. The second picture of the *Shekhinah* presents her presence in the exile and needs for her redemption from the exile. The both pictures of *Shekhinah* assume a hope for the *Shekhinah*'s homecoming from heaven or from exile together with the manifestation of God's glory (Moltmann 1996, 304).

In order that the whole creation becomes God's dwelling place or God's *Shekhinah*, the whole destructive powers and evils that have been perverted productive potentialities in this world will be redeemed. God's relationship to human beings is not changed despite human sins. Even though a sinner is completely godless, still he or she continues to be completely in God's image and he or she will keep being in God's image until God will remain to be faithful. Moltmann says that it is not only that human beings will be redeemed from their sins but also the energies of those sins. For example, hatred must be changed into love, superstition into trust, hopelessness into expectation. So, sinners, i.e. all human beings will be redeemed with their sins (Moltmann 1985, 233).

What is said in the Old Testament about the Wisdom of God, which is the life of creation, is said in the Epistle to the Colossians about the cosmic Christ. Reconciled through his death and gathered up into his rebirth, all created being is drawn into the peace of the new community of creation. There the self-isolation of individual creatures ends. There all acts of violence end. There ends injustice. There ends the power of death. Mutual destruction is replaced by a community of peace in which all created beings are there for one another, with one another and in one another, and through the interchange of their energies keep one another in life, for one another and together. Christ is called 'the head' of this new community of creation because 'in him the whole fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily' (Col. 2:9), and through him this Shekinah overflows into the

51 Rosenzweig describes the *Shekhinah* as a dichotomy that happens in God himself. God divides himself from himself and gives one part of himself to his people. Thus, he is able to share the people's sufferings and to experience their agony of wanderings and exile. In that case, when God is presented as the exiled God, God brings himself in a need of redemption (Rosenzweig 1985, 409–410).

new fellowship of creation, so that with Orthodox theology we can truly talk about a 'deification' of the cosmos.

MOLTMANN 1990, 255

God will enter into the world⁵² and make it his dwelling place and all his creation will share his place throughout his creating inventive and artistic life. The main foundation for the deification of the cosmos must be found in the cosmic incarnation of God. Hence, heaven and earth will be God's dwelling place, i.e. the kingdom of glory (Moltmann 1985, 183). In that kingdom of glory, the creation of God will remain only God's creation nothing more. God will restore everything what he has created and his creation will become the new creation of all things. The end time will come at once to all times and then eternal creation will begin (Moltmann 1990, 302–303, 317). That creation will become a world without end with eternal life and in that world joy will exist forever (Moltmann 1985, 184). The space of creation will become an omnipresent where the whole creation will be able to participate in omnipresence of God himself. This is an eschatological interpretation of God's creation. New life will be in the new creation where God will have his everlasting dwelling and the earthly, temporal creation will become an eternal creation.

Just as everything proceeds from the one God, so everything returns to the one God again. Way out and way in correspond. So the time of the world as a whole takes the form of the *circulation*, the circle. If the end corresponds to the beginning, and if this beginning returns again in the end, then the time of the world has a splendid symmetrical conformation. What happens at the end can then only be the 'restoration' of the beginning.

MOLTMANN 1996, 263

The basic for the hope of the new heaven and the new earth may be found in an eschatological expectation for the final God's dwelling in his creation. God will dwell among his people and he will be their God and they will be his people (cf. Ezek 37:27; Rev 21:3). The eternal creation and the everlasting kingdom of glory will be combined by the cosmic, eschatological *Shehkinah*.

Christians have the universal and eschatological hope for the new creation of all things because 'in Christ' they find the dwelling of God Father and the dwelling of believers and followers of Christ (Moltmann 1996, 305–306). The

52 See e.g. Schuele (2012, 16–29).

idea of the *Shekhinah* represents temple theology⁵³ because God will dwell in his creation and his creation will be his dwelling place.

Moltmann says that eschatology is about new beginning, the coming of God and the cosmic *Shekhinah* of God.⁵⁴ He calls the indwelling Spirit of God the *Shekhinah*, which penetrates in the entire cosmos with life giving energy, preserving God's creation in life and while transforming it into a new life. The *Shekhinah* is a divine presence or divine indwelling. In his book *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, Moltmann gives a short explanation regarding the *Shekhinah* as the divine presence in the Temple, which is correct regarding the Pentateuchal explanation of God's presence. That divine presence was only possible to experience in the Temple in the celebration of certain days. In the New Testament, that temple becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit of men and women's own bodies (1 Cor 6:13–20). Furthermore, Moltmann explains that in the end the temple of God's presence will be the new heaven and the new earth. The whole creation will become God's dwelling place and will be transfigured through God's glory. "God in the world and the world in God—that is what is meant by the *glorifying of the world* through the Spirit. That is the home of the Trinity." (Moltmann 1981, 105).

After redemption, God's creation will be restored and renewed. The end will correspond to the beginning. The whole creation will reach its destination in the new creation and God will be eternally present in that creation that will become the temple for his eternal *Shekhinah*.

The history of God's indwelling in people and temple, in Christ and the Holy Spirit, point forward to their completion in the universal indwelling of God's glory and its manifestation: 'The whole earth is full of his glory' (Isa 6:3). Through the historical process of indwelling and its eschatological completion, the distanced contraposition of the Creator *towards* his creation becomes the inner presence of God *in* his creation. To the external presence of God *above it* is added the inner presence of God *within*

53 Moltmann interprets his temple theology using the biblical references from the book of Revelation chapters 21 and 22 and Ezekiel 37 and 48 where he speaks about the visions of the heavenly Jerusalem vs. worldly Babylon and Rome. Also, he deals with the earthly and the heavenly Jerusalem, i.e. the City of God as crystal temple and Garden City (Moltmann 1996, 308–319).

54 "The ultimate *Shekinah*, this cosmic incarnation of God, is the divine future of the earth. In this expectation we shall already treat the earth as 'God's temple' here and now, and cherish its creatures as sacred." (Moltmann 2004a, 26).

it. To the transcendence of the Creator towards his creation is added the immanence of his indwelling in his creation. With this the whole creation becomes the *house of God*, the *temple* in which God can dwell, the *home country* in which God can rest.

MOLTMANN 1996, 307

God's *Shekhinah* in the whole creation reflects also her holiness and glory. At the end God will redeem everything that belongs to him and he will have his dwelling place among his redeemed creation. The light of God will shine and penetrate into his creation. The redeemed creation will be holy together with the holy God. The whole created beings will participate in the presence of God's glory. God alone is holy and throughout his present holiness the whole humanity will be sanctified and free. God will find his perfect rest in his new heaven and new earth. Throughout his dwelling in his community of creation, his justice, peace and righteousness will rule eternally in his divine everlasting life (Moltmann 1997, 46–47).

Rosenzweig explains that God's glory is scattered all over the created world in numerous sparks. These sparks will be gathered together one day and will be brought back home to God. Every God's act or deed or every fulfilment of his decree and commandment realises a segment of this reunion and brings also redemption nearer. Furthermore, he sees that redemption comes here also through the new Adam who is free of all sins and in whom redemption already exists. With the new Adam, the creation will be renewed and will become his place (Rosenzweig 1985, 410–411, 419). "The Son, the eternal counterpart within God himself, becomes the Wisdom, the pattern, through which creation is made. The Son in whom the world is created becomes flesh, and himself enters into the world in order to redeem it. He suffers the self-destruction of creation in order through his suffering to heal it." (Moltmann 1985, 16).

2.7 *Conclusion on Moltmann's Interpretation of the Sabbath*

Regarding the Sabbath commandment in Deut 5:15, Moltmann underlines the connection between rest on the Sabbath day, freedom of servants and deliverance from the Egyptian slavery. Freedom from exploitation and oppression is intertwined with the cessation of all creative work. The Sabbath day and the story of Exodus, as supplements of one another, present the image of freedom for God's people. The Sabbath day mirrors the image of internal freedom while the story of Exodus shows the image of external freedom. God's presence may be experienced in the Sabbath while his active presence is revealed in God's history by the event of Exodus. Rest and peace of the Sabbath day can be experienced without any exploitation, brutality and dominion.

The Sabbath commandment in Exod 20:8–11 is more oriented on the creation story and importance of observing the Sabbath day. All God's creation needs to sanctify the Sabbath day abstaining from any creative work and intervention in the nature. Nature itself needs to have rest. Through fellowship, celebration and joy in existence of God's creation, the Sabbath day is sanctified.

Regarding these two types of the Sabbath commandment, Moltmann underlines an importance of the story of Exodus and creation story. The God Creator of the world is also the God Deliverer from the Egyptian slavery. The remembrance on God's deliverance connects God's eternal Sabbath of creation. Keeping and sanctifying the weekly Sabbath day will bring enjoyment of the eternal Sabbath day.

The first thing that God hallowed was the Sabbath day, thus that day is the main formation of creation and the most sacred time for the Israelites. The Sabbath day crowns the world as God's creation. God created the world out of love for his glory. All human beings with all other earthly and heavenly beings give praise of God's glory in the enjoyment of God's Sabbath delight over creation. Through a proper understanding of the Sabbath day is possible to see the world as God's creation. The Sabbath day does not have its pair like others in the story of creation, thus it becomes the feast without end.

Keeping the Sabbath day continually week after week throughout a year makes that year a sacred year. The weekly Sabbath day generates the feast of creation present in God's rest where all creation may find its rest too. Moltmann underlines that God is imminent and present in his creation. All creation may experience God himself throughout God's rest in his creation. Also, he says that God's eternal presence is intertwined with God's temporal creation in his Sabbath rest.

According to Moltmann, observing the Sabbath day brings peace with God, ourselves, and all his creation. All creation needs to have rest and needs to be seen again as God's creation. The rhythm of work and rest shows the pulse of earthly life and the spirituality of life. Furthermore, the author underlines that the Sabbath day discloses itself as the existence and rhythm of eternity in time, the presence in history, and the foretaste of the coming glory. The Sabbath day connects this world with the world to come.

Furthermore, Moltmann underlines that the Sabbath legislations are closely connected with the values of growth and harmony with nature. The Sabbath of the land is the outcome of the covenantal relationship between God, his people and the land. Thus, an ecological wisdom means a proper keeping of the Sabbath of the land. If God's people will keep the Sabbath of the land then they will stay in that land and enjoy in its products. The Sabbath of the land

is God's ecology and strategy to preserve the life that God has created. Natural theology, according to Moltmann, directs people's knowledge of God who is the God of nature and all creation. All God's creation will be transformed in order to participate in God's glory. The Sabbath of the land gives a foretaste of the kingdom of God's glory in which the people of God will gladly come to their eternal dwelling in God's midst. Human beings are invited to reconcile with nature based on the legislation about the Sabbath of the land in the covenant of God's creation.

Moltmann, following Augustine, emphasises that God created the world with time and that time became the part of the created creation. God is the everlasting end of all times. The created time will become the eternal time of creation. The worldly time will be transformed into the time of righteousness and after 'the last day' will start the eternity without end.

Moltmann's interpretation of time combines linear and temporal concepts because interpretation of linear time may have only certain events. Future should be seen in the past and past in the future. For example, the remembrance on historical events in God's history, God of the past influences and determines the present. With that concept of remembrance the present time can be the present of the past time and through the concept of expectation the present of the future.

Moltmann speaks about different concepts of time in the biblical traditions, such as the time and the event, historical time, messianic time, eschatological time and eternal time. Furthermore, he has found a difference between the time of earthly creation and heavenly time. The earthly time has the beginning in the event of creating creation, thus all earthly events are temporal, transitory and irreversible. It is not the time of coming aeon and the end of time. Contrarily, the heavenly time has an aeonic time referring to God's infinity. However, the earthly life in present time is touched by eternal life. Thus, the earthly and heavenly times are connected. The earthly creation will leave the time and enter into the aeon of God's glory with the fulfilment of time. Restoration of all things will happen throughout transformation of all times. The time of creation will be transformed into the time of eternity and 'the last day' will mark the beginning of that eternity.

God is already coming towards his creation and with his coming will begin eternal time and everlasting life. Moltmann interprets God's future already moving and coming to us. The eschatological future is the future reflecting in itself all remembered past and experienced and not yet experienced present time. According to Moltmann, eschatology is simultaneous to all times. Whole history of human beings and nature will be reconciled, healed and completed. What is experienced in this life as grace will be consummated in glory, says

Moltmann. History will be fulfilled and concluded by the universal revelation of God's glory. All creation will know his glory.

The German theologian sees God's creation from its beginning oriented towards its redemption. God will restore completely his creation with his redeeming and saving acts. His redemption comes from the future to the past. All past happenings will be returned in the everlasting period of God's new creation of all things. Moltmann concludes that God will redeem his creation and one day God will be 'all in all' (1 Cor 15:28).

Also, God's creation is opened toward future through the Sabbath day, which is the feast of creation and feast of redemption. God's home are heaven and earth. He will rest and dwell in his home, thus all his creation will delight in his everlasting abundance, according to Moltmann. When God's creation will be completed in its redemption, God will be present in his creation in his Sabbath rest. All God's creation will become God's dwelling place in his glory. It will enter into the eternal God's kingdom and eternal life. All creation will be restored in order to become the new creation. That creation will become a world without end. The new, eternal creation will have a new life where God will have his everlasting dwelling. The new creation will become the temple for God's eternal *Shekhinah*. The new, redeemed creation will become holy and free throughout God's present holiness. That kind of creation will participate in the presence of God's glory. In the new heaven and the new earth God himself will find his perfect rest and throughout that rest in his dwelling place in the everlasting life will rule peace, justice and righteousness.

Shekhinah is God's Sabbath in space. It is God's presence but not his complete omnipresence. Thus, according to Moltmann, *Shekhinah* is a dwelling place, the incarnated God's promise and presence of the Holy Spirit of the coming of God. Moltmann has found two different presentations for *Shekhinah* in history. *Shekhinah* was in the tabernacle and had ascendant from the sanctuary. Thus, it has been expected to come again at the End-Time. The second presentation of *Shekhinah* puts its presence in the exile. Both of these presentations underline an assumption for the *Shekhinah's* coming with the manifestation of God's glory.

Regarding the messianic time, Moltmann says following. The Sabbath stands in time but it is more than time. The Sabbath day is connected with the eternity and the future of God's glory. The Sabbath day belongs to the cycle of human time. However, it breaks through the cyclical renewal of natural time by predicting the messianic time. It is the sign of the upcoming freedom from time's cyclical course. Moltmann interprets the messianic time as endless Sabbath. People and nature have been preparing for the coming of the Messiah's time by the observing weekly Sabbath day. The messianic time as a messianic sacra-

ment of time includes celebration of the Sabbath day. Accordingly, the Sabbath day is the eternal messianism that brings the perception of redemption into ordinary life.

The messianic Sabbath of the End-time creation and the eschatological Sabbath of the eternal creation will be established by the presence of eternity in the Sabbath rhythm of the days, the years and the seventh years. Hallowed Sabbath day will become the eschatological Sabbath or *Shekhinah* at the end.

It must be emphasised that in the Old Testament God's presence is primarily connected with his people and the tabernacle/temple not so much with creation and nature. Regarding Moltmann's explanations of God's presence we should conclude that in this case he does not follow always the Old Testament's presentation of God's presence. Moltmann's interpretation was generally well grounded in exegesis (once one allows for the canonical necessity to listen to all the voices in the Scripture and not only one on its own). The one place where perhaps he goes beyond the evidence was over associating God's presence especially with the Sabbath. That comes later, especially in the tent/tabernacle (e.g. Exod 25:9 etc.). So what is the basis for the Sabbath connection? Perhaps it lies in the sanctification of the Sabbath by God and humans, since holiness is so strongly associated with the tabernacle that by analogy God's presence there might be able to be carried over to the Sabbath.

3 The Year of Jubilee in Moltmann's Theology

The Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee are holy years. It is obvious for Moltmann that these years are connected with the weekly Sabbath day. 'The land shall observe a Sabbath for the Lord' (Lev 25:2b). The weekly Sabbath day gives break from the working time and ordinary living. The Sabbath year brings restoration to human beings, animals and nature throughout a common rest every seventh year. The people need to allow the land to keep its Sabbaths in order to dwell securely in that land (Lev 25:2–4, 18). Each one who will keep that commandment will live in peace and have a benefit from the abundant yield of his land. If the people will observe the Sabbaths of the land then they will be secured and blessed in and with that land. However, if they will disregard God's land then they will be deported from it until the land will recover itself because nature as God's creation has its own right. Human beings need to respect and treat nature as God's property.

The retribution for not keeping the commandment for the Sabbath rest for the land was the captivity in Babylon. The Israelites stayed in the Babylonian exile until the land obtained its Sabbaths and recovered from the exploitation

(2 Chron 36:19–21). After the seventy years of exile in Babylon, the Israelites were permitted to come back to the recovered land. This is the story that is relevant for us today. If the earth will not have its Sabbath rest but instead will be brutally exploited, the inhabitants on that earth will be expelled so that the earth could recuperate from human exploitation. Human beings and animals have right to use the land in order to have food and place for living without cruel mistreatment. Everything that was created as God's creation needs to live in peace and harmony and needs to be respected as God's belonging. Nature also needs to preserve its integrity as God's property (Moltmann 1997, 49, 85).

Moltmann underlines the biblical legislation that the land, which has solemn rest every seventh years, also celebrates God. The earth is renovated and reflects again its dignity as creation of God (Moltmann 1992, 96–97). Keeping the land's rest is also important for making the natural environment a place where people can dwell and live. Therefore, the one of the main reasons for the land being allowed to rest, remain fallow, is ecological. Nature should not be destroyed by people, first of all because the whole world is God's good creation. God discloses himself to his creation not only as their Creator but also as their Preserver and Saviour (Moltmann 1985, 46, 54).

According to Moltmann, the sign of God's covenant with his land is 'the Sabbath of the land' whether the sign of God's covenant with his people is the Sabbath day (Moltmann 1990, 309–310). After seven Sabbatical years on the Day of Atonement with the sound of trumpet God's year of liberty is proclaimed (Lev 25:8–55). Beside the rest, debts need to be remitted, debt-slavery has to be cancelled⁵⁵ and God's righteousness, compassion, justice and freedom need to be restored among his covenant people.

It was to be sanctified through the restitution of the original righteousness of God's covenant among his people: 'Then each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his family.' The sale of what had originally been provided by God was to be cancelled and debts were to be wiped out. Slavery for debt had to be annulled, and the liberty of every member of God's people had to be restored—but the liberty of every stranger as well. In this Year of Jubilee too the Sabbath of the land was

55 Moltmann mentions the institution of 'prosbol' installed by rabbis Hillel and Shammai in Israel. When the seventh year of remission approached the increasing of freezing of credit occurred and some people were not able to get a loan. The institution of probol was a solution for them because they were able to get a loan from the court and judge. According to these, Jesus' proclamation of the year of liberty and remission becomes obvious (Moltmann 1990, 121).

to be celebrated: 'You shall neither sow nor reap ... but eat what it yields out of the field.' The special thing about this Year of Jubilee seems to be that God's laws and edicts were to be imposed on the people, and were then to be passed on by the people to creation, to strangers, animals and land.

MOLTMANN 1985, 289

The year of Jubilee brings primarily freedom to those such as debt-slaves, homeless, isolated people. Moltmann underlines the importance to understand properly the theme of freedom here. He comments two definitions of freedom in his book *The Spirit of Life*. The first definition he takes from political history, which defines freedom as domination. That kind of domination in our societies can be seen throughout on-going struggle for power. The person who wins has the power. All others are losers and slaves of that winner. Thus, freedom exists only for the victorious people who own societies. Only the ruler is a free person and all others who need to serve him are in bondage. The master is only free at the expense of others. His liberty and leadership position bring oppression for his servants and his wealth and power make other people poor, desolate and weak. That person is concerned only about his possession and his domination. Freedom in this case means domination by the master and ruler and that kind of freedom destroys human life.

The other definition about freedom Moltmann takes from social history. Social history defines freedom as sociality. The relationships of equality are important in order to get acceptance and freedom. In order to be accepted and respected by others, it is important to give respect and accept others. Freedom can be experienced only in a society that nourishes equality among its inhabitants. Freedom as sociality only can bring unity among people and can heal those who were hurt by domination of cruel masters. Freedom as sociality can connect person with person, human communities with nature, human soul with her body and peace with God. The true freedom can be experienced when we live in harmony with each other, with nature and with God. This kind of freedom is a real freedom much bigger and stronger than only freedom from slavery (Moltmann 1992, 117–120).

Rosenzweig calls the Day of Atonement the Sabbath of Sabbaths because it was celebrated the last tenth day of the period of redemption. The Day of Atonement is seen as the highest festival of redemption. It has some similarity with the Sabbath day because the Sabbath was also considered as the festival of redemption. Redemption is God's great Sabbath day of rest. The Day of Atonement, which happens once in a year, reflected symbolically the day of the access to eternity, whether or not the Sabbath day symbolised the consummation for

the week (Rosenzweig 1985, 323, 359, 367). The redemption of human beings and the redemption of nature are intertwined and not separated. It would not be possible to gain any kind of salvation and everlasting life for human beings without the cosmic renewal and transformation of heaven and earth. Human existence is and will be bonded with nature (Moltmann 1996, 259–260).

The Sabbath day, the Sabbath year and the Jubilee year are sanctified through abstaining from any kind of productive labour and through them the world especially nature is seen as God's creation (Moltmann 1985, 285). Accomplishing peace with nature is only possible throughout the practise and celebration of God's holy times. Furthermore, the weekly Sabbath, the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee have the biblical basis for the spirituality and the health of the body, the soul and the earth (cf. Is 58:6–9) (Moltmann 1992, 96).

3.1 *The Jubilee Year at the End-Time (Is 61:1–11)*

According to Moltmann, in the history of Israel the Sabbath year has been probably kept and celebrated but the Jubilee year is historically unsure (Moltmann 1985, 289). It is necessary to take into consideration the prophetic vision regarding the messianic Sabbath written in Is 61:1–11. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn." (Is 61:1–2). Moltmann says that this text speaks about the coming of the messianic prophet who will with his coming bring also the proclamation of the Jubilee year of the End-time. The messianic era will bring freedom, righteousness and justice in the same way as describes the legislation of the year of Jubilee (Moltmann 1985, 289–290). This coming messianic prophet is presented as the main bearer of the Spirit who brings justice and compassion to the poor, the imprisoned and the broken hearted. He will bring peace to human beings and whole God's creation. Furthermore, he will bring a new beginning for all existing.⁵⁶

The feast of creation is also the goal of God's history with the world, from the creation in the beginning to the creation of the end-time. Therefore the Sabbath also reaches forward to the messianic times. The messianic time is often called the 'age of the eternal Sabbath,' and thus the weekly Sabbath is understood as the anticipation and foretaste of this future.

MOLTSMANN 1978, 76

56 e.g. Is 11:6 ff.; 43:19; 65:17; 66:2, 22 ff.

Moltmann sees in the arriving of the prophet Messiah and his messianic time also connection with the Sabbath. Also, Trito-Isaiah combines the Messiah's message of justice and compassion with the announcement of the eternal Sabbath of the End-time. The main reason for that is that Sabbath has been known as the day that holds in itself social and ecological justice (Moltmann 1992, 54). Also, the messianic Sabbath time will bring rest for the land and for the whole creation in the same way as should do the Sabbath year and the Jubilee year. On the messianic Sabbath God's presence, rest and peace will be stretched out among his whole creation (Moltmann 1985, 289–290).

However, the year of Jubilee should be understood as having a present and not just future significance. In the same way as Israel's prophets called God's people to repent and live in faithfulness to the covenant, also the kingdom today as counter-system invites people to the life of servanthood and integrity consciously rejecting the corrupt principles and structures of the present age. The message of Jubilee is the key to understanding the present relevance of the kingdom. It is important to see the kingdom of God as opposing to the principles and the view of society that are dominant in the world and often in the church. Christians are not called to ignore the world but for an attitude of integrity of faithful community that will by its very nature be distinct from a cruel, self-centred and selfish society. They need to be counter-system to that society.

Moltmann sees the connection between the first exodus and the End-time. During the event of the first Exodus, God showed himself as the God of the powers of nature. At the End-time God will together with the homecoming of his people renew and change his nature too. The Messiah will bring peace and justice to human beings and nature because the land will have its Sabbaths too (Lev 25–26) (Moltmann 1992, 54). The messianic prophecy of the new exodus has in itself the notion of the first exodus and also the notion of future hope (cf. Is 65:17). A new exodus means also a change for the whole God's creation because of that creation will become a place of God's glory. It will fulfil and complete also the initial God's creation. God's indwelling in his world will bring also his everlasting righteousness, justice, peace and liberty among the whole creation and his renewed creation will become his dwelling temple (Moltmann 1981, 101–104). The creation will move from the temporal to the eternal condition.

Sabbath day, Sabbath year and Year of Jubilee point in time beyond the time of history, out into the messianic time. It is only the Sabbath at the end of history that will be 'a feast without end'. It is only this Sabbath that will fulfil God's creation Sabbath and the Sabbath feasts of Israel's history

in the world. If the historical Sabbath is 'the dream of completion', this messianic, eternal Sabbath is surely 'the completion' of Israel's dream.

MOLTMANN 1985, 290

3.2 *Jesus' Public Ministry (Lk 4:18ff.)*

Regarding the year of Jubilee, Moltmann quotes the New Testament as well. Thus, we are going to take into consideration Moltmann's interpretation of the Jubilee in relation with Jesus' public ministry.

The Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee refer in history beyond itself toward the messianic future time. Christianity believes that through Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead, actually the messianic era was proclaimed and initiated (Moltmann 1985, 6). Together with the announcement of the messianic Sabbath started also Jesus' public ministry (Lk 4:18ff.). In the synagogue on the Sabbath day Jesus read the scroll of the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." (Lk 4:18–19). When Jesus finished with his reading of the text he said: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:21b).⁵⁷ Moltmann underlines here that Luke following Is 61:1–2 refers to the proclamation of the Lord's year of favour or year of Jubilee ordered in Lev 25:10ff.⁵⁸ Hence, Jesus proclaimed a year of liberty throughout the land.⁵⁹

Moltmann says that literal approach to these different biblical texts⁶⁰ can help to understand Jesus' ministry among the poor,⁶¹ the broken-hearted, the oppressed, and the needy.

57 Miller suggests an interesting connection between the year of Jubilee and Moltmann's teaching about the history of freedom in "The Revolution of Freedom," *Religion, Revolution and the Future*. Miller underlines that the Jubilee message especially 'today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing' (Lk 4:21) is still going on in the history of humankind and that God will free his creation to live in freedom and service (Miller 1975, 421).

58 "Jesus' proclamation puts the acceptable year of the Lord into force. 'Acceptable' means what is agreeable to God—his good pleasure. It is the year when he does good to us, the year of his grace. The acceptable year of the Lord is the time of salvation. The disastrous years of poverty, imprisonment and blindness are passing away; the year of salvation is coming." (Moltmann 1983, 75).

59 Moltmann here refers to Zimmerli (1970); Yoder (1972); Ringe (1985); Trocmé (2007).

60 Also Matt 4:17 and Mk 1:15.

61 For Moltmann the 'poor' are also the hungry, the unemployed, the sick, the discouraged, the sad and suffering. They are the subjected, oppressed and humiliated people. He stated

The prophet Isaiah had given hope to the poor, imprisoned and oppressed people who were in exile in Babylon: Behold, your God is coming. He will come and liberate the prisoners and lead the forsaken home again to Zion. Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, the lame will walk, the deaf will hear, the dumb will praise God. Then the feast of the Lord will begin—a feast without end.

MOLTMANN 1983, 73–74

The presence of the kingdom of God in history contains in itself also the legislation of the year of liberty. Jesus' public ministry and his teaching refer also toward him as the person of Messiah and his mission of the interpretation of the year of liberty.

"Should you ask, 'What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather in our crop?' I will order my blessing for you in the sixth year, so that it will yield a crop for three years. When you sow in the eighth year, you will be eating from the old crop; until the ninth year, when its produce comes in, you shall eat the old." (Lev 25:20–22). This promise of security corresponds to Lk 12:29 ff. and its invitation not to worry.

One of Jesus' main teachings is the importance of forgiving debts, which literally corresponds to the remission of debts in Lev 25:28, 54. According to these, Moltmann here follows Yoder and his teaching that the Lord's Prayer, especially a part that says 'forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors', means actually a true prayer of Jubilee year (Moltmann 1990, 120; Yoder 1994, 62). The year of Jubilee is the year of liberation that brings freedom from debts. Debts and debt-slavery are cancelled and there is possibility to return to own property and family (cf. Lev 25:10, 14–17). God's justice, righteousness and covenant are restored among his people. The year of liberty brings a social and ecological reform. Any kind of slavery and exploitation of the people and the earth shall be cancelled.

Jesus' interpretation of the Sabbath commandment was in the framework of the decree of love and discipleship. He proclaimed the imminent God's kingdom, which reflects the image of the messianic time.⁶² Jesus proclaimed

that poverty extends from socio-economic and physical poverty to psychological, moral and religious poverty (Moltmann 1990, 99).

- 62 "The thesis 'Christ is the end of the Law' goes back to the rabbinic hope that 'the Law will end when the messianic kingdom begins'. But sins are transgressions against the Law. In this case the messianic time cannot be a time without the Law, but must be understood as the time of the Law's perfect fulfilment ... Christ is the *goal* of the law (*telos*). The unconditional love which is possible through Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit is

the Jubilee that may be recognised as the authorisation of the new community of the kingdom. Jesus himself reveals about the nature of God who rules over all. The person of Jesus and discipleship of the community of faithful are seen as the most convincing basis for the counter-system model of the kingdom of God.

That image of the messianic time infers healing for the blind, the deaf, the lame, life for the dead and decent life for the poor.⁶³ Jesus' interpretation of the law, especially the law regarding the Sabbath was connected with the liberty of the promised and fulfilled messianic time. The commandment about the Sabbath, the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee indicates that liberty too. Moltmann sees that commandments as the commandments of the covenant can be only fulfilled in the messianic time. Jesus' teaching about the Sabbath was presented as the messianic accomplishment of the dream of completion for Israel and all other working days were presented as the messianic celebration of life. Jesus' announcement of the forthcoming of kingdom of God creates the entire life as a feast of Sabbath (Moltmann 1985, 291–292).

The prophecy in Is 61:1–2, as already mentioned, proclaims the messianic year of freedom, which brings the messianic time as well. That means that this prophetic messianic coming of the year of liberty goes beyond the Jubilee law in Lev 25.⁶⁴

Moltmann underlines that Jesus used the Mosaic legislation in order to radicalise his new messianic explanation of the laws concerning the divine socioeconomy in the kingdom of God.⁶⁵ Jesus announced the year of Jubilee that was not a period of one year. He proclaimed a year of freedom throughout the messianic endless Sabbath. For some historians, Jesus announced truly a year of Jubilee in 26 year A.D. to the indebted and enslaved people in Galilee, i.e. in Jesus' announcement of the kingdom, that Jubilee year has represented a sign of the imminent God's kingdom. "At all events, it is clear that God's approaching kingdom in the history of Jesus takes the practical form of the messianic fulfilment of Israel's laws about the year of release and liberty." (Moltmann 1990, 121).

the fulfilment of the Torah, and the form in which the Torah is carried over and translated into the messianic era." (Moltmann 1990, 123).

63 e.g. Matt. 5:1–12, 8; 9:2–8; 10:7.

64 See also Westermann (1969, 364 ff.).

65 Trocmé, and also Yoder, underline that Jesus proclaimed in a full socio-economic and political sense the year of Jubilee according to the Mosaic tradition. However, Sloan criticises the explanation that played down the eschatological and cultic aspects of the Jubilee. For Sloan, Luke is also concerned about God's accomplishment at the *parousia*. See Yoder (1972); Sloan (1977).

The messianic Sabbath and proclamation of God's kingdom are intertwined in Jesus' message. The messianic Sabbath and Sabbath year are completely rational outcome of the fulfilment of the End-time (Moltmann 1985, 291–292). Moltmann speaks about the several stages of God's eschatological history with Jesus Christ the Messiah who has come. These stages are: Jesus as the Man of God or the earthly Jesus, Jesus crucified, the resurrected Jesus, the present and the coming One. Jesus as the Christ of God is the eschatological Jesus for Moltmann, i.e. the Messiah, the Son of Man and the coming Wisdom of creation are present in the eschatological person of Jesus Christ. He mirrors also God's kingdom and the beginning of the new creation (Moltmann 1990, 33, 149).

According to the author, Jesus as the Messiah dwells in this world as the crucified Christ and he, as the risen Christ, indicates the universal *Shekinah*. Moltmann distinguishes the three types of kingdom and God's exposure.⁶⁶ The kingdom of nature presents God as the Creator and Keeper of his whole creation. The kingdom of grace reveals the presence of God through his covenant and Jesus Christ, and the kingdom of glory refers to God who will dwell in the temple, which will be his renewed creation (Moltmann 1996, 200). The main foundation for the kingdom of glory is the crucified Jesus. That kingdom of glory begins with the resurrection of Jesus Christ and his glorification and it renews heaven and earth (Moltmann 1985, 90).

When, according to Lk 4:18ff., in his first sermon in Nazareth, Jesus proclaims the 'fulfilment' of scripture and the messianic Sabbath—'the acceptable year of the Lord'—the authority of his proclamation is founded on the Shekinah of God's Spirit within him. It was because of this that he could call to himself 'the weary and heavy-laden' so as to 'refresh' them, and to communicate to them the divine *menuhah* which fulfils God's Sabbath and his Shekinah. For the Easter community of Christians, God already 'dwells' in this godless world in the form of the crucified Christ, while in the form of the risen One he anticipates through the presence of his Spirit his universal Shekinah in the new creation. Through the forgiveness of sins and the liberation from the power of sin, men and women again become vessels for the indwelling of God's Spirit, and are filled with hope for that new creation which God will universally indwell, and in which he will be universally present.

MOLTMANN 1996, 267

66 See also Taubes (2009, 102–108; 117–135).

The Sabbath of liberation, the remission of people's debts, the Sabbath of the earth, God's justice and righteousness are the main themes of Jesus' ministry and his proclamation of God's kingdom. Fulfilment of these themes should be seen and interpreted in the light of the coming kingdom of God (Moltmann 1990, 121). God will renew all human beings and all other creation but eschatological kingdom of God's future history involves all its historical anticipation. Thus, it becomes the power and strength for the future among our present history and the coming future. Christians live in the advent time and they have been waiting for the coming of God.

Moltmann says that hope needs to be one of the main motivational features in the life of Christians and the church. Christian's hope leads toward mission to all nations of the world with the message for righteousness and justice in the world and love for the life and love for the whole God's creation.

The present situations of the world are not able to find a solution for the complete redemption of this world and we cannot put our trust in the work of human beings in order to bring justice and peace to God's creation. According to Moltmann, Jesus' resurrection gives us confidence that God will bring the complete transformation of his creation. God will renew his creation. The coming of God will bring within itself the promised future and lordship, peace and righteousness of God. This is hope and calling to witness about the coming kingdom of God. But that promised future depends of necessity to the universal Christian mission to all nations. The hard and difficult situation of the present world is not a reason against hope and faith in the coming of God but it shall be an encouragement for belief in the God who will completely redeem his creation and this world (Moltmann 1993, 117–119, 225–229).

In the meantime the faithful community needs to have a passion for life and aversion toward the 'culture of death' because the culture of death projects thinking of despair, resignation and hopelessness. For Moltmann, this is the major problem of present day society. Society without hope is death society. Hope renews people's minds and actions. Hope is important for present life, especially for the sick, the dying and the needy but also it is important in order to accept a new creation of all things, which will come with the kingdom of God's glory (Moltmann 1993, 32–33). With the coming of God in and through Jesus Christ begins the year of Jubilee too (Moltmann 1983, 75). According to Moltmann, the year of release in Lev 25 means celebrations of God's joy over the common reconciliation and freedom of human beings.

The weekly Sabbath points beyond itself to the Sabbath year, the Sabbath year points beyond itself to the Year of Jubilee, the Year of Jubilee points towards the Sabbath of the messianic era, and the Sabbath of the mes-

sianic era points towards God's own eternal Sabbath. The Sabbath day is a kind of messianic intermezzo in the era of history, and the celebration of the Sabbath is a kind of messianic 'sacrament of time'. Through the succession of Sabbath days, and Sabbath years, 'the One who will come' moves time into the rhythms of messianic expectation ... In this way the Sabbath opens human beings and nature for the coming of the wholly-other time of the Messiah.

MOLTMANN 1990, 27

Moltmann here draws a gradation line concerning the time issue. That progression line includes the weekly Sabbath, the Sabbath year, the year of Jubilee, the Sabbath of the messianic era and God's own eternal Sabbath.

Jesus' teaching of the fulfilment of the year of Lord's favour includes also a liberty of the life of the whole creation. Moltmann concludes that unfortunately during the history the Israelites hardly had an opportunity to keep the year of Jubilee. However, the prophets tried to make a connection between the year of Jubilee and the coming of the Messiah. Believers in Jesus Christ and his message already live with him in his era of the messianic everlasting year of liberation. They have to act as Jesus taught them and follow Jesus' example in forgiving debts, liberating the exploited and stopping the exploitation of the earth. Throughout that kind of behaviour, the community of Jesus can only bring the alternative to this world's system of exploitation and injustice.

The ethics of the present day society disagree with the message of the messianic Sabbath liberation and the coming kingdom of God. Jesus' life and ministry were in opposition to the dominant and ruling classes of his earthly life.

The messianic community rightly understands itself as a 'contrast society' (Gerhard Lohfink's phrase), which breaks through the fateful compulsion of violence which lies heavy on humanity, and offers a viable alternative to this deadly vicious circle. That is why this community is recognisable and identifiable. It is not anonymous. It has a name. For it acts alternatively, not conformistically.

MOLTMANN 1990, 125–126

Moltmann says that the year of release needs to be interpreted through the person and ministry of Jesus Christ and the alternative agenda of Jesus' community. Even though this is not enough to make a big change in our present day societies, this interpretation and the alternative programme get more and more plausibility in our day.

3.3 *Conclusion on Moltmann's Interpretation of the Biblical Jubilee*

Moltmann connects the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee with the weekly Sabbath day. Resting of the land is a very important regulation for all of these sacred cyclical times. Attainment of peace with nature is possible to have throughout the celebration of these holy times. According to Moltmann, these sacred times have a biblical basis for the spirituality and health of body, soul and earth.

The whole creation and nature itself must be appreciated and treated as God's property. The land, which has its rest, is renovated. It has dignity as God's creation and gives a healthy environment where people can live. God reveals himself to his creation as its Creator, Preserver and Saviour. One of the main goals for the rest of land is ecological. Moltmann brings a new formula regarding the sign of God's covenant. One sign of God's covenant with his land is the Sabbath of the land and the other sign of God's covenant with his people is the Sabbath day.

Moltmann explains the year of Jubilee in correlation with the cosmic renewal, transformation of God's creation, salvation and everlasting life. He underlines that human existence is and will be bonded with nature as well. God's righteousness, compassion, justice and freedom will be restored among his covenant people when the whole creation will have its rest, when all debts will be remitted and debt slavery cancelled. First of all, the year of Jubilee brings freedom to debt slaves, homeless, poor and needy people.

In order to understand correctly 'freedom' which brings the year of Jubilee, Moltmann gives two definitions of freedom. He uses the first definition from political history that formulates freedom as *domination*. Freedom as domination brings freedom only to the powerful person who owns societies. Only the powerful is a leader and free at the expense of others. All others who need to serve that powerful master are in bondage. The powerful master gets a freedom as domination through his possession but that kind of freedom destroys lives of the oppressed servants, poor, desolate and weak people who are exploited by the master.

However, the other definition is used from social history, which defines freedom as *sociality*. Moltmann is in a favour of that kind of freedom that is closely connected with the concept of freedom of the biblical Jubilee. Freedom as sociality makes the relationships of equality and mutual respect. Equality among the people must be experienced and practised. Freedom as sociality brings healing to all those who were afflicted by domination of the greedy and cruel masters. That kind of freedom connects person with person, human communities with nature, human soul with her body and creation with God. When people live in harmony and equality among each other, with nature and God,

then true freedom can be experienced. That kind of freedom is stronger and greater than freedom from slavery. Accordingly, we should conclude that it is very important to take into consideration Moltmann's interpretation of freedom in order to understand his explanation of the meaning and uniqueness of the biblical concept of Jubilee.

Moltmann shortly concludes without explanation that the Sabbath year in the history of Israel has been celebrated while the year of Jubilee is historically unsure. This is the reason why Moltmann takes into consideration the prophetic vision concerning the messianic Sabbath described in Is 61:1–11. In this context, Moltmann uses the phrase 'messianic Sabbath' showing that the Sabbath goes forward to the messianic times, which is often called the time of the eternal Sabbath. The weekly Sabbath is the foretaste of that future. The Sabbath contains in itself a social and ecological justice. Also, the messianic Sabbath time will bring rest for the land and the whole God's creation in the same way as the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee. Is 61 speaks about the coming of the messianic prophet who in his coming proclaims the Jubilee year of the End-time. The messianic time is very similar with the year of Jubilee in a way that both of them bring freedom, righteousness and justice. The coming messianic prophet brings justice, freedom, peace and new beginning for all existing.

Moltmann underlines that the Sabbath day, the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee point out into the messianic time but only the Sabbath will be a feast without end at the end of history. In the End-time God will renew and transform his people and nature too.

Moltmann takes into consideration Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead in order to explain proclamation of the messianic time. Also, Moltmann interprets Lk 4 in correlation with Lev 25 and Is 61. Jesus' public ministry and his teaching refer toward the person and mission of the Messiah and the interpretation of the year of freedom. Is 61 and Lk 4 radicalise the Jubilee legislation of Lev 25 showing the new messianic interpretation of the laws about the divine economy of God's kingdom. Jesus proclaims a year of freedom that is not limited to a period of twelve months. He announces the messianic Sabbath without end. God's coming kingdom in the history of Jesus takes the practical appearance of the messianic realisation of Israel's laws about the year of freedom.

In this context, the author speaks about three types of kingdom and God's presentation. The kingdom of nature shows God as the Creator and Keeper of the whole creation. The kingdom of grace presents God in and through his covenant and Jesus Christ. And, the kingdom of glory reveals God in the temple as his dwelling place. That temple will be his transformed creation. The

kingdom of glory begins with the crucifixion, resurrection and glorification of Jesus Christ.

Moltmann interestingly argues that Jesus' proclamation of God's kingdom is not always clear and understandable. Thus, he uses the biblical approach of Lk 4:16 ff. in connection with Lev 25:10 ff. and Is 61:1–2. According to these mentioned verses, Moltmann concludes that the proclamation of the imminent kingdom of God is actually the proclamation of the Lord's year of Jubilee. Thus, this literally approach helps us to comprehend Jesus' public ministry. "... the presence of God's kingdom takes the form of the year of liberty and its laws (Lev 25:10, 14–17)." The legislations of the year of Jubilee described in Lev 25 and 26 consist a complete social reform and the prophetic verses regarding the year of Lord's favour in Is 61 brings the promise about the messianic prophet. Moltmann here talks about the messianic year of liberty. Furthermore, Jesus' teaching and public ministry, especially the remission of debts and the liberation of debt slaves, contain in itself the messianic message and legislation of the year of Jubilee (e.g. Lk 12:23 ff. and Lev 25:20–22).

If we go back to Christ's proclamation of God's kingdom, we see clearly that, as the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount show, the kingdom focuses on the poor, the sick and the weaker members of any given society. All kingdom-of-God theology becomes for Christ's sake a theology of liberation for the poor, the sick, the sad and the outcasts. So kingdom-of-God theology doesn't just enter the already existing public forum of its given society. It brings to light publicly the people whom society pushes into the underground or into private life. It brings the eschatological light of coming redemption into public life as it exists, and reveals the human need for redemption.

MOLTSMANN 1999, 253

Moltmann also concludes that Jesus' Prayer, especially a part, 'forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors', means a true Jubilee prayer. Any kind of slavery, oppression and exploitation of the people and the earth must be cancelled. The year of Jubilee brings a socio-economic and ecological reform. With the coming of God in and through Jesus Christ starts the year of Jubilee. The year of Jubilee brings celebrations of God's delight over the common reconciliation, transformation and freedom of human beings. Jesus' proclamation of the forthcoming of God's kingdom generates the entire life as a feast of Sabbath. By the succession of Sabbath days, Sabbath years, Jubilee years, the time moves through the rhythms of expectation for the coming of the wholly-other time of the Messiah.

Accordingly, the followers of Jesus Christ need to live with him in his time of the messianic everlasting year of freedom. They have to practice Jesus' example in forgiving debts, liberating the oppressed and stopping the exploitation in and of the earth. That kind of behaviour will bring the alternative to this worldly system of exploitation and injustice, says Moltmann. Thus, the year of Jubilee needs to be interpreted through the person and ministry of Jesus Christ in order to become the alternative programme of Jesus' faithful community.

4 **The Biblical Jubilee and the Social Doctrine of the Trinity in Moltmann's Theology**

This chapter will investigate Moltmann's concept of the Trinitarian kingdom and social doctrine of the Trinity⁶⁷ in order to understand his interpretation and actualisation of the biblical Jubilee.

Moltmann has developed his fully social doctrine of the Trinity⁶⁸ with the aid of Trinitarian hermeneutics. He has tried to liberate the Christian doctrine of God from the ancient metaphysics of substance and of the modern metaphysics of transcendental subjectivity. Moltmann opposes the 'monarchical concept of the Trinity', where the Father is recognised as the main source of all divine actions, the Son as a mediator between the Father and human beings, and the Holy Spirit as the power of the Father and the Son (Moltmann 1992, 290–291). Moltmann underlines the equality of the divine persons and that the relative independence of the person and work of the Holy Spirit in its community with the Father and the Son show the social doctrine of the Trinity.⁶⁹

67 Moltmann uses Nicholas Fedorov's (Nikolai Fyodorov) idea of a 'social Trinitarian program'—'The dogma of the Trinity is our social program'. Volf argues that Trinitarian theology provides a frame of values that can form Christian discipleship. See Volf (1998, 403–423).

68 The recent literature on the doctrine of the Trinity is rapidly expanding. See e.g. Jenson (1982); Jüngel (1983); Zizioulas (1985); Boff (1988); Hodgson (1989); Pannenberg (1991); Sorč (1991; 2006); Johnson (1992); Rahner (2001); Letham (2004); Volf and Welker (2006); Coppedge (2007); Trier and Lauber (2009).

69 "It is McDougall's explicit intention to engage with 'Moltmann's social trinitarian theology with the dual aim of evaluating its theological contributions and at the same time advancing a constructive agenda for its further development' (p. 9). In order to link Moltmann's doctrine of the Trinity with his vision of the Christian life, she proposes from the very outset a theological strategy that she calls 'social trinitarian analogy of fellowship'. In pursuing this aim three leitmotifs are singled out which help her to find a way into Moltmann's theology: first, the biblical-narrative structure of Moltmann's theology, second, his soteri-

Moltmann concludes that the unity of persons in their relationships does not have a fixed order in the Trinity. The Triune God is a community of distinctive persons, built on the interrelationships of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The divine persons exist in relationship with one another and live in and through one another. They are determined through these relationships, i.e. they exist in relationships (Moltmann 1981, 171–174).

The Trinitarian kingdom does not have hierarchy, domination or subjugation but it has reciprocal relationship, love, mercy and freedom. It is an open and inviting community, i.e. the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is an open unity for sharing itself with others and for the uniting of the whole of creation in itself and with itself. Moltmann in his book *God in Creation* says that “if we understand the Creator, his creation, and the goal of that creation in a Trinitarian sense,⁷⁰ then the Creator, through his Spirit, dwells in his creation as a whole, and in every individual created being, by virtue of his Spirit holding them together and keeping them in life.” (Moltmann 1985, xii). The relationship between the divine persons of Trinity is not a relationship of domination to the created world.⁷¹ The concept of God as the Triune God shows the prototype of true human community.⁷²

In his book *the Crucified God*, Moltmann makes an objection to Barth's view of the Trinity where the person and history of Jesus Christ is a ‘fixed and presupposed reality’. It should be presented as a ‘parable open to the eschaton’. Moltmann underlines that the Bible does not give an account of an ontological immanent Trinity, which differs from an economic unity of the Triune God and his relationship to the world.⁷³ Happening in the cross of Jesus

ological approach in an eschatological key and, third, his doxological-political paradigm of Christian praxis. Building on these leitmotifs she further adopts Moltmann's conviction that the divine love is disclosed narratively. With all this in mind McDougall traces in a very sympathetic and sometimes critical way ‘the evolving patterns in Moltmann's writings with which he describes the relationships among Father, Son, and Spirit’ (p. 25).” (Nausner 2007, 425).

70 Torrance criticises how Moltmann describes the Trinitarian relationship to the world and how he binds God's being too closely to the progress of human history. Torrance says that Moltmann compromises the transcendence and sovereignty of the Trinity over creation (Torrance 1996, 310–313).

71 About the Trinity in a pluralistic age and theological essays on culture and religion see Vanhoozer (1997).

72 See Volf (1998, 403–423); Sorč (2007, 177–210).

73 “On this point Moltmann subscribes to a version of Karl Rahner's identity axiom: ‘The ‘economic’ Trinity truly is the ‘immanent’ Trinity and the ‘immanent’ Trinity is the ‘economic’ Trinity.’ He reformulates Rahner's axiom by emphasising the identity between the

Christ⁷⁴ represents the history of God's happening. Moltmann argues that we may take part in the process of Triune God's history.⁷⁵ The believers correspond to the single being of the Triune God not to the threefold nature of God's internal essence.

So as *imago Christi* human beings are gathered into his relationship of sonship, and in the brotherhood of Christ the Father of Jesus Christ becomes their Father also. This is to say that through the Son the divine Trinity throws itself open for human beings. The Son becomes human and the foundational image of God on earth. Through the Son, human beings as God's image on earth therefore acquire access to the Father. As God's image, human beings are the image of the whole Trinity in that they are 'conformed' to the image of the Son: the Father creates, redeems and perfects human beings through the Spirit in the image of the Son.

MOLTMANN 1985, 242–243

Furthermore, the Triune God is 'free in love' and 'frees in love'.⁷⁶ Barth's idea of God's decree of his self-determination is the free overflowing of God's goodness. God's free self-determination and the overflowing of his goodness are two sides of the eternal origin of God's creative and suffering love. Moltmann says that "God makes nothing out of himself which he was not already from eternity ... Love is the goodness that communicate itself from all eternity." (Moltmann 1981, 54, 57).

God is freedom and love. Love is the self-communication of God's goodness. That love enters, participates and gives its power for other being. Love of self-differentiation brings self-communication as well. God discloses himself to other being out of his inner delight and eternal love. The inner-trinitarian love

loving relationships of the trinitarian persons with the world and the essence of the divine life: 'The history of salvation is the history of the eternally living, triune God who draws us into and includes us in his eternal triune life with all the fullness of its relationships ... *God loves the world with the very same love which he is in himself*.'" (McDougall 2003, 183).

74 About the cross as military symbol for sacrifice see also Moltmann (2006a, 259–263).

75 The doctrine of the Trinity reveals also that through the Holy Spirit, the history of Christ with God and of God with Christ becomes the history of God with us. Accordingly, this is also our history with God. At this point Moltmann pays his tribute to Hegel, the philosopher of the Trinity (Macquarrie 1980, 6).

76 These two ideas are very similar with Barth's concept of God who loves in freedom. See e.g. Moltmann (1981, 55).

in eternity is the same love of God towards the world.⁷⁷ The freedom of the Triune God is love that gives himself to others. Freedom means friendship. Moltmann talks about the doctrine of the monarchical episcopate that brought unity into the churches. However, it did that in a way which eliminated and destroyed the charismatic prophets. Moltmann goes against the usefulness of the doctrine of the monarchical episcopate referring on Jesus' death and resurrection, which are the central mystery of the divine revelation.

Moltmann talks about the unity of the faithful community based on Jesus' prayer in John 17:20 ff.⁷⁸ That unity is a Trinitarian unity where the Father dwells in the Son and the Son dwells in the Father. Believers are invited to participate in the divine unity with and in God's fellowship. They need to accept one another as Christ accepts them.⁷⁹ Accordingly, Moltmann makes a conclusion that the doctrine of the Triune God represents the church as a 'community free of dominion'. The principles of concord, dialogue, agreement, harmony, brotherhood and sisterhood in the community of faithful must be established according to the doctrine of the social Trinity.⁸⁰

This freedom consists of the mutual and common participation in life, and a communication in which there is neither lordship nor servitude.

77 About God's inner life versus God's relations to creation see e.g. Grenz (2004). Grenz analyses the story of Trinitarian theology in the last century and discusses theologians such as Moltmann, Rahner, Pannenberg, Boff, Zizioulas, von Balthasar, etc.

78 "During the last century, the ecumenical movement aiming at putting into effect Jesus' prayer at the Last Supper 'that all of them may be one' (John 17:21), which is also the substance of the Church, has become a standing endeavour of almost every Church and Christian community. In the Catholic Church it has been since Vatican II that ecumenical thought has acquired the weight of a doctrine and ecumenical activities have become an integral part of any pastoral work. In order that the work for unity may really lead to church unity, it will be necessary to extend the christocentric (monistic, exclusivistic) conception of unity to a trinitarian (diverse) understanding of unity. In the same way, it will be necessary to change the juridical concept of the Church and take up the concept of the Church as a community, *communio*. Such understanding and action also requires a re-assessment of the role of the Holy Spirit. In the trinitarian perspective, the unity of the Church is a *creatura Patris et Verbi et Spiritus Sancti*." (Lah 2012, 635).

79 Moltmann does not directly appeal to Trinitarian fellowship when he speaks about the Christian life. "Most often he invokes his Trinitarian theology only indirectly, by transposing it into a norm or rule of faith for guiding human relationships. Most generally, Moltmann's social Trinitarian rule prescribes that true human relationships involve reciprocal self-giving and acceptance of others." (McDougall 2005, 138).

80 See e.g. Moltmann (1981, 54–60, 200–202).

In their reciprocal participation in life, people become free beyond the limitation of their own individuality ... His freedom therefore lies in the friendship which he offers men and women, and through which he makes them his friends ... God demonstrates his eternal freedom through his suffering and his sacrifice, through his self-giving and his patience. Through his freedom he keeps man, his image, and his world, creation, free—keeps them free and pays the price of their freedom. Through his freedom he waits for man's love, for his compassion, for his own deliverance to his glory through man. Through his freedom he does not only speak as Lord, but listens to men and women as their Father.

MOLTMANN 1981, 56

The Trinitarian relationship invites human beings to be God's friends in that relationship. Thus God, who is free in love, is ready to free his human beings in love. Human beings are invited to participate and share in that Trinitarian fellowship.⁸¹ Humankind can receive and correspond freely to the Triune God. Through that fellowship with the Triune God, human beings are empowered to give fellowship to one another as well. The personal relationships need to constitute the Trinitarian life of fellowship. That kind of relationship depends evenly on the aspiration to share oneself in the life of another person and on the acknowledgment of the other individual's difference or personality. That kind of friendship is found in the connections that bind diverse persons together as a community. It represents freedom and a life of mutual participation that emerge in reciprocal giving and receiving, recognition and acceptance (Moltmann 1992, 118). A person can offer friendship through compassionate fellowship by his or her partaking in the troubles or joys of others. Also, that person needs to be active in solidarity with persons on the margins as well. That may include resistance and opposition against unjust structures and relationships that establish social exclusion and exploitation. The self-giving love brings a restorative forgiveness and healing and offers inclusivity and acceptance back into community with others.

81 Moltmann's main principle in defining the human being as *imago Dei* and as *imago Trinitatis* is a social or interpersonal likeness. His social Trinitarian interpretation of the *imago Dei* in humankind prescribes the inseparability of personal identity and sociality. In that way self-relation and social relations come into existence together. Moltmann predicates his analogy of fellowship in terms of the quality of relationships among divine persons. It is not a one-to-one correspondence between divine and human fellowship but a correspondence between the models of fellowship that create the inner divine life with those that can be implemented in the human community. See McDougall (2005, 116, 119).

For Moltmann the doctrine of the Trinity requires a development of 'social personalism or personal socialism'. In order to establish just and human society, the human rights of individual and of society must be equally combined. In this case the doctrine of the Trinity has a very important role.⁸² The unity of the society of faithful is a Trinitarian unity through fellowship with and in God (Moltmann 1981, 199–202).

Moltmann underlines an importance of inclusive fellowship. Contrarily to the Greek concept of friendship *philia*, where friendship is limited to those who are identical in gender, socio-economic status, race, Moltmann speaks about friendship, which is more than *philia*.⁸³ He talks about friendship that breaks the bondage of human exclusion and reaches beyond those who are like us toward all those who are different and drastically 'other' than us. That friendship of life-giving love is without reserve or conditions toward others.⁸⁴

Moltmann argues that the persons in Trinity have the divine nature in common. However, their particular individual nature is recognised in their mutual relationship to one another. In their mutual relationships they exist in relationships and they are determined as persons. They cannot replace the other person in Trinity but they exist completely in the other (Moltmann 1981, 172–173). Moltmann's interpretation of the social doctrine of the Trinity shows

82 Cunningham argues about Moltmann's turning the doctrine to political and social issues and for his formulation of the doctrine in terms of the narratives of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. He criticises the abstraction of Moltmann's social Trinitarian program saying that his practical recommendations are too unspecific to engage today's challenging issues (Cunningham 1998, 42–43).

83 "Christians are not soldiers under law but artists who are called to shape their lives 'into an artwork which brings to expression something of the beauty of divine grace and the freedom of divine love.' Their lives of prayer in the Spirit and their interest in life mutually stimulate, empower and deepen each other. Hence Moltmann rejects the privatisation of friendship and its reduction to a matter of feeling which is characteristic of modern times and shows that the friendship of Christ for the disciples, the tax collectors and sinners 'did not know the privacy and intimacy of modern friendship' (p. 62). To enable people to overcome the fear and lack of interest in the other Moltmann sees the liturgy as providing a feast where people can express and purify their desires, urges and affections and prepare themselves in the power of the Spirit to accept each other at a level impossible in an over-rationalised and over-stratified society." (Corbett 1978, 202).

84 See e.g. McDougall (2003, 199). McDougall offers the comprehensive interpretations of Moltmann's Trinitarian theology. Moltmann himself, contributing a foreword to the book *Pilgrimage of Love*, states: "I can simply delight in the author's independent 'thinking with' and 'thinking beyond' my own work." (McDougall 2005, xi).

the kingdom of God that is conceived in a communal Trinitarian fellowship. The Trinitarian fellowship portrays divine community.

Also, that fellowship is an example of the nature of true human community. Also, human fellowship needs to partake in the inner life of the Triune God.⁸⁵ McDougall says “while Moltmann’s social Trinitarian theology has surely been a work in progress during the past twenty years, one aspect has remained consistent throughout: the biblical witness has been his governing source and *norma normans* for his doctrinal reconstruction.” (McDougall 2003, 182). Moltmann describes the fellowship of Triune God with human beings as analogous to the *perichoresis*⁸⁶ that exists among the divine persons. The love of God is given to human beings and human beings are in God. Thus, they are able to experience the reciprocal *perichoresis* of God and themselves.⁸⁷

In order to live in Trinitarian relationships with others, each person needs to have his or her own inner stability and wholeness (1 Thess 5:23). A person contains body, soul and spirit. All three components are different and they constitute a person. These three components need to be harmonically intertwined and accomplished. Inner consistency, stability, integration, focus, permeation, allow person to establish real relationships with neighbours, nature and God. A person who loves does not break this *perichoresis* cycle but he is a part of that cycle bringing in it his own unique seal (Sorč 2007, 198–201).

In the same way, as the divine persons indwell in one another through their reciprocal actions of self-giving, so human beings can indwell in the centre of that life-giving love (Moltmann 1992, 86, 195). Human relationships need to be based on a dynamic of self-giving donation and self-differentiation in a way as it is in the fellowship among the divine persons. Human fellowships should be diversity in unity.⁸⁸ In that kind of unity each individual potentials or talents are realised while differences may abound (Moltmann 1992, 219).

85 Kilby makes objections on Moltmann’s social Trinitarian concept. She criticises Moltmann’s usage of anthropomorphic language in order to find social analogies for the life of Triune God and propose them as rules for human relationships (Kilby 2000, 432–445).

86 “Moltmann borrows the ancient term *perichoresis*, drawn from the Eastern Church Father, John the Damascene, to describe the nature of this communion among the divine persons. *Perichoresis* signifies the circling movements of mutual indwelling that arise from the three persons’ eternal acts of self-donation.” (McDougall 2003, 186).

87 See e.g. Lawler (1995, 49–51).

88 “In the course of its history, Christian theology has taken two different analogies as a way of understanding human likeness to God in God’s own presence. One of these parallels is the psychological analogy of the soul that dominates the body; the other is the social analogy of the community of women and men, parents and children. Ever since Augustine, the first of these has led in the West to the development of the ‘psychological’ doctrine of

The participation in the Trinitarian fellowship authorises human beings to respond to the Triune God and his self-giving with their actions of love.⁸⁹ In that way, human beings become children of the Triune God who glorify him and become the glory of God. The glory of the Triune God may be seen and recognised in the fellowship of faithful community of Christ (Moltmann 1981, 198).

Moltmann indirectly describes the Trinitarian fellowship and open friendship,⁹⁰ which human beings should imitate through the person and work of Jesus Christ especially toward those who are thrust out of society.⁹¹

(Jesus) celebrated the messianic feast with the people who had been thrust out of society. In inviting joy, he opened himself for them, and respected both them and the poor, as the first children of the divine grace that creates everything afresh. He recognised their dignity as people. He bridged the gulf of their self-isolation, and did away with the social prejudice under which they suffered. Through speech and gesture, the

the Trinity, while in the East the second suggested the beginnings of a social doctrine of the Trinity. The first shows a tendency towards monotheism in the concept of God, and a trend towards individualism in anthropology; whereas the second finds in the triune God the archetype to true human community." (Moltmann 1985, 234).

89 "Against critics, although she (*McDougall*) admits that Moltmann's rhetoric about the Christian life at times sounds too optimistic, she contends that his trinitarian social analogy does demonstrate a theological cohesion between his concept of God and the concrete practices of believers. However, in her opinion, the reason for a sometimes too rosy picture, and therefore a failure to give a more concrete account of Christian practice, lies in Moltmann's neglect of an adequate doctrine of sin that corresponds to his social trinitarian framework. What is needed is a trinitarian understanding of sin as a fall from fellowship. Such an understanding, she argues, 'joins together the ethical and the mystical, the political and the doxological dimensions of the Christian life. It highlights how distortions of true human fellowship are intrinsically related to the loss of personal fellowship with the Trinity' (p. 150). In this way, she concludes boldly, 'speaking robustly about sin in the midst of grace can advance Moltmann's praxiological agenda—of encouraging believers to engage in the messianic praxis of trinitarian fellowship and of transfiguring all things into a fuller and more glorious image of the coming kingdom of fellowship' (p. 151)." (Nausner 2007, 427–428).

90 "Through acts of creative and passionate fellowship, open friendship breaks the bondage of human exclusion and weaves new bonds of community in its place. Regardless of an individual's situation, whether she or he is the victim or perpetrator of broken fellowship, the practice of open friendship restores an individual to the embrace of community." (McDougall 2005, 146).

91 About open friendship in a closed society see e.g. Slade (2009, 9–23).

divine 'friend of sinners and tax collectors' spread the encouraging and supportive atmosphere of open friendship among men and women.

MOLTMANN 1992, 258

Accordingly, we may say that especially his book *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*⁹² on the doctrine of God has made a huge impact on the contemporary renewal of Trinitarian thinking. Moltmann interprets the Trinity and the relationship between the divine persons in liturgical and socio-political terms.⁹³ That kind of interpretation invites human beings toward spiritual contemplation and worship of the Triune God and also for a proper action in this world. For Moltmann, theology must be alive and practical. Contemplation and action must be closely connected. The practical implications of theological beliefs and awakening the church to its socio-political and ethical responsibilities are underlined and closely connected in Moltmann's writings.⁹⁴

92 See e.g. Bauckham (1997, 155–164).

93 Following Joachim of Fiore's doctrine of the kingdom, Moltmann expands Joachim's definition of the kingdom of the Father as the kingdom of nature or the kingdom of almighty power by the dimension of the future because of the glorification of the triune God that is the main aim of the creation (Moltmann 1981, 209). Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135–1202) interpreted views on the relationship between the two Testaments, the meaning of the Trinity and the nature of history. He was working with patterns of 2 and 3 and 7 and 12. Accordingly, he established a theory of three great ages of history that correspond with the Triune God. The First Age was ascribed to the Father, the Second Age with the Son and the Third Age with the Holy Spirit. The First Age of the world began with Adam and was consummated in Christ. The Second Age will be consummated in this time while the Third Age will be consummated in the consummation of the world. However, Moltmann underlines that Joachim's view in fact imply four stages: "Joachim interpreted the history of the kingdom in Trinitarian terms, and the consummation of the kingdom in eschatological ones. This is to say he in fact developed a doctrine of four kingdoms: the kingdoms of the Father, the Son and the Spirit will be consummated in the triune God's kingdom of glory. This fact is often overlooked." (Moltmann 1981, 207).

94 Nonetheless, Jesus' proclamation is a gospel, i.e. good news to the poor (Lk 4:18ff.). "Moltmann defines the term 'poor' broadly. They are 'the hungry, the unemployed, the sick, the discouraged, and the sad and suffering. The poor are the subjected, oppressed and humiliated people.' Jesus' proclamation does not eliminate the hunger of the poor per se, but proclaims to the poor 'their future in the kingdom of God' and offers them 'a new dignity'. Notably, the counter-term for 'poor' is not rich, but 'the man of violence', who makes someone else poor and enriches himself at the other's expense. Moltmann will appear later on to use the term with 'rich' synonymously, but in such cases the term 'rich' should be understood as those who are in the position of oppressors. The nearness of God's kingdom in Jesus' proclamation calls these rich to total conversion. They are meant to

The Triune God is the representative of the kingdom, not earthly secular or ecclesiastical leaders. Christians in the present time reign with Christ only in a spiritual sense. Their invitation is to serve in faithfulness to Christ. Finally all creation will share in the blessings of the kingdom but in the present time the main participants are faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. The most important sign of the kingdom according to the kingdom as a counter system is demonstrated in loyalty and faithfulness to Jesus Christ. Accordingly, kingdom signs such as freedom, justice and peace are established on earth. The ultimate goal of the kingdom is peace and justice on earth and in all creation as God's regulation is completely manifested.

According to the kingdom as a counter system that Moltmann follows, Jesus himself is the key to the kingdom. In finding and faithfully following him disciples fulfil their vocation.⁹⁵

5 Implementation of the Biblical Jubilee in Moltmann's Theology

According to Moltmann, Christian theology needs to be involved in the public affairs of society in the light of Christ for God's kingdom. "It becomes political in the name of the poor and the marginalised in a given society. Remembrance of the crucified Christ makes it critical towards political religions and idolatries. It thinks critically about the religious and moral values of the societies in which it exists, and presents its reflections as a reasoned position." (Moltmann 1999, 1).

change and seek liberating community with the poor if they are to be included as citizens of the kingdom." (Harvie 2008, 151–152).

95 "Moltmann is very much aware of the tension to be found in most churches today between the so-called 'progressive' and 'traditionalist' factions, between those who are concerned for relevance in the contemporary world and those who are concerned with maintaining a recognisable Christian identity. He ruefully confesses that he has succeeded in pleasing neither faction. He is too conservative for the radicals and too radical for the conservatives. He is far from following Joachim of Fiore's prescription for a Christianity of the Spirit in which institutions, ordained ministry and sacraments would all disappear in pure spontaneity. But equally he rebels against the rigidities that characterise the established churches of western Europe. Much of the inspiration for his book, he says, has been gained not from his experience of his own branch of the church in Germany, but from what he has seen of the churches in the Far East, Africa and Latin America ... He visualises a much more open type of church, more missionary, more ecumenical, more political, more identified with the wider community. Such a church would live in the power of the Spirit rather than looking to the power of the institution, and to the extent that it did so, it would be a more truly Christian church." (Macquarrie 1980, 6–7).

Moltmann talks about the problems of our modern world in his book *God for a Secular Society*. For example, he talks about the exploitation of labour and natural resources, ecological destruction, about the burden of debts and interest. "Unless the fundamental values of this society of ours are given a new orientation; unless we find a new praxis of living in our dealing with nature; unless human beings arrive at a new understanding of themselves and evolve an alternative economic system; unless we arrive at these things it is not difficult to extrapolate from the facts and trends of the present crises the ecological collapse of the earth." (Moltmann 1999, 15).

Furthermore, Moltmann makes a close connection between the religious crisis of the modern civilisation today and the ecological crisis⁹⁶ in nature. The main goals of the modern world today are development, growth, conquest and domination. The nature of the earth is highly exploited. It is important to recognise and accept the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of life of the whole creation. Also, an example of the relationships between the divine persons in the Trinity must be followed in a community of faithful and in life promoting support. Whatever human beings do to nature, they do that to Christ as well. Moltmann says that God's dwelling and place of rest is the cosmos (Moltmann 1991, 120).

Moltmann brings three Christian perspectives regarding the liberation of the earth. They are cosmic spirituality, the new earth science, and human beings and nature in covenant with God. He underlines the importance of discovering theologically the Triune God who is a God in community, abounding in relationships and love. The mutual relationships and indwelling of the Triune God is also the mystery of the community of creation that corresponds to God. In the way that human beings think about God they will think about themselves and nature too. Moltmann makes clear that "according to Christian understanding, all creation is a Trinitarian process: God the Father creates through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. Seen from the other side, this means that all things are created by God, formed 'through God', and exist in God." (Moltmann 1999, 101–102). Moltmann here speaks about Noah and his covenant that gives the foundation for essential human rights. Out of this covenant follow the rights of future generations and nature as well (Moltmann

96 Moltmann proposes three Christian perspectives to overcome the ecological crisis in nature today. The ecological crisis is, at the same time, a religious crisis of the Western world. These three perspectives are:

1. The Divine Spirit is the Life of the whole Creation.
2. God's Covenant creates Justice in the World of Humans and of Nature
3. The Sabbath of the Earth: Divine Ecology (Moltmann 1968, 117–123).

1999, 110). He underlines that the covenant gives justice, dignity and rights to human beings and nature as well. Accordingly, all living creatures need to be appreciated equally as God's covenantal partners.

Moltmann speaks about the equality of all human beings. Every individual needs to have a fundamental equality in order to achieve universal liberty. When he talks about equality of human beings, he describes equality as a social concept, i.e. justice. Just and socio-political conditions bring peace between human beings. Also, he talks about equality as an ethical concept of solidarity. Accordingly, Moltmann underlines that the main social task of the future is equality. It is important to create a world of socio-economic justice, human solidarity and love. In other way, increasing criminality, financial crises, poverty will increase in the near future (Moltmann 1999, 21, 27).

Moltmann is following Luther's theology of the cross regarding Christ's suffering on the cross and his resurrection. Christ's suffering is a sign of Christ's solidarity with all those who are suffering whether his resurrection refers toward the general resurrection of the dead and transformation of the whole creation. However, Moltmann's theology of the cross brings something more. He underlines an importance of Jesus Christ's solidarity in suffering, which is social protest against cruelty and oppression.⁹⁷ Moltmann concludes that Christians in their identity with the crucified Jesus Christ are called to live in solidarity with the suffering, especially the poor, the oppressed and the needy (Moltmann 1974, 25).

The divine *pathos* is based on God's interest in human beings and all his creation. Moltmann emphasises an importance to observe that God's *pathos* was present in his history with Israel and in their covenant relationship as well. Moltmann's doctrine of the Trinity and his concept of a suffering God has Jewish roots.⁹⁸ Accordingly, Moltmann has developed a close similarity between the active suffering of love at the cross of Christ⁹⁹ and the tradition of rabbinic concept of *Shekhinah* in which God's suffering is revealed as his self-

97 See e.g. Althouse (2003, 124).

98 See e.g. Bauckham (1987, 105).

99 See e.g. Bergin (1986, 193–211). "The central Christian event of Jesus' dying is continually represented, and in each re-appraisal new insights emerge for the life of humanity. It is my belief that the theological expressions offered by Jürgen Moltmann and Edward Schillebeeckx are currently instrumental in encouraging a new awareness of the person of Jesus as he lives and dies, of the mystery of God who is revealed to us in this person of Jesus who suffers even unto death, and ultimately of the mystery of ourselves being redeemed through suffering." (Bergin 1986, 211).

differentiation and self-humiliation in history.¹⁰⁰ God transfers himself into the history of his covenantal relationship with his people. God loves his creation in a way that he willingly suffers under the deeds of men. God loves this world to the point of suffering.

The divine pathos is reflected in man's participations, his hope and his prayers. Sympathy is the openness of a person to the present of another. It has the structure of dialogue. In the *pathos* of God, man is filled with the Spirit of God. He becomes the friend of God, feels sympathy with God and for God. He does not enter into a mystical union but into a sympathetic union with God. He is angry with God's wrath. He suffers with God's suffering. He loves with God's love. He hopes with God's hope.

MOLTMANN 1974, 272

Jesus' followers need to bring change in the present world because of their socio-economic and political responsibility. We may conclude in this context that Moltmann's political theology is intentionally political in orientation.¹⁰¹ Althouse correctly concludes Moltmann's theology with the following:

'Political theology', in Moltmann's terms, seeks the liberation of the weak, the poor, the suffering, the hungry, the disabled, any who have been victimised, or marginalised, and the victimisers as well, who need to be liberated. He sides with the feminist critique of theology which seeks to breakdown the patriarchal structures of church and society. His political theology is akin to Latin American liberation theology in that it emphasises a 'preferential option for the poor', but differs in that it has developed within the context of post-war and the threat of global nuclear holocaust. His political theology seeks world peace, ecological responsibility and the affirmation of human rights and dignity. It seeks a way for

100 "Moltmann emphasises the continuity between the 'suffering love' of the crucified God and the ancient Hebrew understanding of divine pathos (and the modern Jewish one) to build this case, Moltmann draws especially upon Abraham Heschel's study of divine pathos in the prophetic literature and on the rabbinic theology of the Shekinah, or the 'self-humiliation of God.'" (McDougall 2005, 51).

101 About his political theology and theology of liberation, especially socialist theology, theology of peace, ecological theology, theology of human rights, feminist theology see Moltmann (1998, 60–80).

human beings of differing national, racial and ideological contexts to live together humanely.

ALTHOUSE 2003, 140

Moltmann describes his political theology with the words: "the intention of our political theology is undoubtedly to make people who are the humiliated objects of the power and violence of others the free determining subjects of their own lives. We should like to see the experience of this same freedom among the people who are suffering from the brutality of 'the free market economy' as well." (Moltmann 1999, 59).

For him, political theology and liberation theology¹⁰² speak in the name of the sufferers. The first theology brings internal critics while the second one has the external criticism of today's world. Liberation theology searches for a liberated church, which produces a liberated society. Accordingly, only a true reform and revival of the churches can bring socio-economic revolution as well. The liberation of the church needs to lead to a community of faithful people.

For Moltmann, the main foundation of human dignity is the fact that human beings are made in the image of God. When Moltmann speaks about human dignity he speaks about human rights such as protective rights, rights to freedom, social rights and rights of participation as well. Protective rights include the right to life, liberty and safety. Rights to freedom include freedoms of religion, opinion, and assembly, while social rights contain the rights to work, to food, to a home.

The rights of persons can be implemented only in a just society, and a just society can be attained only on the foundation of personal rights. The liberty of persons can develop only in a free society, and a free society grows up only out of the liberty of persons. The free choice of work cannot

102 "For Latin American theologians, the first stage of the hermeneutical circle is a strong commitment to the poor and oppressed in society. Theology starts from the praxis of liberation. They claim that the poor enjoy an epistemological privilege, a special understanding of God, Jesus and society. It is fascinating to see the biblical development of their exegesis. The classic of the movement, Gustavo Gutiérrez's *A Theology of Liberation*, placed a strong emphasis on the Exodus-Sinai tradition of the Old Testament, which he tended to interpret in basically militant terms with a certain tolerance of a 'theology of violence'. Gradually it has been realised that the struggle against injustice will be long and protracted thus leading to a theology of the Exile and of Job, moving towards a focus on the kingdom of God and of identification with the poor of Christ." (Kealy 1995, 90–91). About liberation, theology and the future of the poor see Gutiérrez (1998, 96–123).

be attained without the right to work. And the right to work presupposes the free choice of work, if people are to live in freedom.

MOLTMANN 1999, 124

Moltmann concludes that when there is no justice in the global economy, there will come a socio-economic and ecological catastrophe on humanity. He suggests that economic justice and rights must be in harmony with ecological justice in the natural world. The Scriptures, especially Lev 25 and 26, emphasise that people who observe the Sabbath of the land will live in peace and security while those who disregard it will experience drought, famine and poverty. Also, all those who disrespect the rights of the land destroy the life of coming generations and their survival on that land (Moltmann 1999, 119–133).

Moltmann speaks about the urgent need of liberation of humankind toward better shared relations. He talks about vicious circles of death that do not allow men to be free men.¹⁰³ Desperate socio-economic and political situations and structures direct human life towards destruction and death. Moltmann underlines an importance of applying several processes of liberation from different kinds of oppression at the same time. A person needs to be free in a sequence of areas and dimensions.¹⁰⁴ Moltmann speaks about different vicious circles of death which are closely connected. These circles are:

- the vicious circle of poverty
- the vicious circle of force
- the vicious circle of racial and cultural alienation
- the vicious circle of the industrial pollution of nature and
- the vicious circle of senselessness and godforsakenness.

103 “When the passionate devotion to life is missing, the powers to resist are paralysed. We must learn to love life with such a passion that we no longer become accustomed to the powers of destruction. We must overcome our own apathy and be seized by the passion of life ... The more passionately we love life, the more intensively we experience the joy of life ... the more we also experience the pain of life and the deadliness of death. We experience joy and pain, we become alive and mortal at one and the same time, not simply in life, but in that interest in life we call love.” (Moltmann 1978a, 22, 25–26).

104 McDougall underlines that in light of Moltmann's idolatry critique, he transformed his political theology of cross into a theology of liberation that sought to break free from these vicious circles of death. Moltmann called the church to practice its discipleship in concrete solidarity with the victims of the world (McDougall 2005, 17).

The main cause for poverty may be found in class domination and exploitation. Unequal and unjust treatment brings poverty to the majority of people. Poverty causes illness, exploitation and overwork. It is obvious that the economic systems of the world bring riches to the rich countries and more devastation and lack of sources for life to the poor countries. The poor countries get more debts. The growth of organised armies often generates new oppression and poverty. The international arms race is a dangerous activity that leads towards instability, insecurity and mistrust.¹⁰⁵

Furthermore, Moltmann speaks about the vicious circle of ethnic, cultural and technocratic alienation where human beings have been degraded without identity in the manipulative systems. With that kind of alienation, those people are capable of being shaped in the image of their cruel leaders. This alienation is closely connected with the industrial pollution of nature. Industrialisation causes ecological crisis. Also, life on the earth is influenced by the devastation of the natural world and the mistreatment of nature. Moreover, Moltmann speaks about the vicious circle of senselessness and godforsakenness in addition to the socio-economic, political-cultural and industrial circles. Some people in today's world are human beings without hope and purpose in their lives. Usually, the main problem of man in today's world is disheartenment, which produces desperation, a sense of uselessness, indifference and unconscious death-wish (Moltmann 1974, 329–332).

After detection of different kinds of vicious circles, Moltmann offers some solutions towards liberation. All mentioned are interrelated and dehumanise human life. Thus, Moltmann underlines that ways towards liberation need to recognise and identify all vicious circles. In order to free human life from exploitation and oppression, liberating action must influence all vicious circles at the same time. Here, Moltmann talks about socio-economic, political, cultural, environmental and spiritual dimensions of life.

Regarding the socio-economic dimension of life, liberation action needs to satisfy material needs, such as housing, food, clothes, health and bring social justice. Socio-economic justice goes against any kind of exploitation and domination and it is for a proper redistribution of economic power. According to Moltmann, the vicious circle of poverty is able to break through control of economic power, giving social justice to the poor, the exploited and the needy. Similarly, liberation action from the vicious circle of oppression brings dignity to human beings in the political dimension of life. Economic and political power need to be under control. All human beings need to be equally and justly

105 About trust in a culture of suspicion and spin see Moltmann (2004b).

included in the distribution of political responsibility and decision-making. Human beings need to be liberated from political repression and control.

Furthermore, Moltmann underlines an importance of integration in society and the recognition of others. Society needs to recognise one's own identity and all racial, cultural, personal and others differences among its people. Self-alienation and alienation of others must be abolished. Also, liberation action regarding the relationship of society to nature needs to break the vicious circle of the industrial pollution of nature. All exploitation of nature must be cancelled in order for human beings to be free from alienation and their socio-economic and political oppression. People's relationships to nature must be a relationship of intercommunication not exploitation. Nature has its own rights and needs to be respected according to God's rule. In order to have the quality of life and peace with nature, people need to treat nature as their environment (Moltmann 1974, 332–334).

In the last vicious circle, Moltmann talks about an importance to have a meaningful and significant life. A 'disheartening society' is a result of oppressed people suffering socio-economic, political, cultural and industrial exploitation. Moltmann calls that kind of exploitation 'inner poisoning of life'. This crisis of meaning influences all kinds of societies not only the poor. This vicious circle of disheartening society can be healed by the presence of purpose and meaning in all happenings of life and relationships. The main problem today is resignation, not having confidence in what God expects from his people. Despair, unbelief, hopelessness and resignation are dangerous problems.

Moltmann talks about the importance of spirituality of life, i.e. he goes against godforsakenness in people's lives. Only present God brings the meaning and purpose in one's life. God is love, which awakens lives of his creations. "If God is all in all in it, man and nature then take part in God's fullness of meaning and potentiality. The freedom of the sons of God and the liberation of enslaved nature (Rom 8.19 ff.) are consummated in the arrival of the complete and universal indwelling of God." (Moltmann 1974, 335). Moltmann underlines the meaning of Jesus Christ who was forsaken on the cross. The cross of Christ gives the courage for a meaningful existence. Moltmann confirms that liberation must be achieved in all these mentioned aspects in the same time.¹⁰⁶

106 Furthermore, any theology of liberations regarding the universal need to be seen in the particular while the eschatological elements in the historical. "... the identifications of the presence of God with the matter involved in liberation from vicious circles are real symbols, real ciphers and material anticipations of the physical presence of God." (Moltmann 1974, 336–337).

Moltmann underlines that it is only possible to achieve complete freedom in God and in his kingdom of glory. That complete and perfect freedom means the unrestricted partaking in the everlasting life of glory of the Triune God (Moltmann 1981, 222). "The Trinitarian doctrine of the kingdom is the theological doctrine of freedom. The theological concept of freedom is the concept of the Trinitarian history of God: God unceasingly desires the freedom of his creation. God is the inexhaustible freedom of those he has created." (Moltmann 1981, 218).

As mentioned previously, we may say that Moltmann has developed a very interesting concept of the social doctrine of Trinity. He talks about the equality of the divine person in the Trinity, which is a community of distinctive divine persons. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are determined through these relationships and they exist in their relationships. The social doctrine of Trinity is an open and inviting community. It is open to share itself with others and for the uniting of the whole of creation in itself and with itself.

The social doctrine of Trinity is a freedom established throughout mutual and common participation in life. The Triune God is free in love and is ready to free others in his love.¹⁰⁷ God's love is an inclusive fellowship, the life-giving love without reserve or any condition toward others. In the similar way, Moltmann teaches that human fellowship needs to partake in the inner life of the divine persons. Moltmann explains that relationship between divine persons and the concept of Trinity with liturgical and socio-political terms. Human beings are invited for contemplation of and in the life of the Triune God and for action in this world. Human actions should be imitation of the person and work of Jesus Christ towards others, especially the poor and the marginalised people. Jesus' proclamation of good news to the poor reflects towards their future in the kingdom of God offering them a new dignity. Accordingly, Moltmann underlines that the concept of Trinity shows the prototype of true, faithful, human community. Also, that concept represents the church as a community free from dominion.

Moltmann suggests that actions that liberate people from vicious circles take place by participation in liberating Trinitarian history in this world. The presence of Triune God may be experienced where the enslaving structures

107 "The hermeneutical key to Moltmann's vision of trinitarian love lies in God's passion for the world, its salvation, and its new creation. It belongs to the essence of that divine passion to undertake a pilgrimage in history in order to return God's beloved creation to God's self. Like the Shekinah, the trinitarian God puts the unity of divine being at risk by linking its eschatological destiny to that of creation." (McDougall 2005, 67).

are unmasked in imitation of the crucified Christ. Participation in the history of Triune God means the dismantling of power structures and reconciliation in today's world.

We should notice that Moltmann here does not develop a clear rhetoric that helps to distinguish between his literal and metaphorical use of the same terms to the divine and human spheres. Also, it is not clear how a particular Trinitarian concept may be applied to human existence. Moltmann's analogy of Trinitarian concept does not show a clear differentiation between the divine and human sphere and their existences. However, that rhetoric can be partially understood throughout the person and ministry of Jesus Christ who allows his followers to call God 'Abba'.

According to Moltmann, the expectation of the universal God's kingdom amongst the poor, the needy and the suffering and life in the community of faithful are closely connected. "The kingdom is so close that God can be called 'Abba'; and when God can be called 'Abba', then his kingdom has already come. Jesus demonstrates this nearness of God by 'having mercy' and 'compassion' on the poor and suffering ..." (Moltmann 1990, 126, 142). He describes the Trinitarian kingdom, which Jesus proclaims with the following words:

In this kingdom God is not the Lord; he is the merciful Father. In this kingdom there are no servants; there are only God's free children. In this kingdom what is required is not obedience and submission; it is love and free participation. How does Jesus manifest the kingdom which he proclaims? He manifests it (as the link with the revelation formula in Matt. 11.28f. shows) by having mercy on the poor, by calling the weary and heavy-laden to himself and refreshing them, by bringing to the poor the joyful message that theirs is the kingdom, and by gathering the oppressed into the liberty of his fellowship. His kingdom is the kingdom of 'compassion'.

MOLTMANN 1981, 70

It must be noted that Moltmann rightly speaks about the ecological crises in our days but he does not offer suitable and concrete guidance for the development of an adequate response. In his doctrine of the Sabbath, he makes a request that human beings and animals as well, should rest and dwell with and in nature like God does on the Sabbath day. Accordingly, the Sabbath day needs to be an ecological day of rest.

Moltmann's request for a liturgical reform is worthy but it is not enough for a proper and successful response to a problem that he is talking about. The industry and technology that drive forward the domination and destruction of nature must be challenged and changed. Thus, we should underline that the

ethical challenge must be made in order to change and transform behaviours and habits of today's world.

Moltmann's explanations of the vicious cycles of death and their dangerous influence on the socio-economic and political situations are illuminating. He underlines an importance of breaking down the hierarchical relationships of domination and exploitation because of their inhumanity. The vicious cycles generate hopeless socio-economic and political structure that leads life towards destruction. Moltmann speaks about the necessity to talk about liberation in several dimensions of oppression at the same time. His notification and explanation of the vicious cycles of death is marvellous. However, he does not give enough solutions and ideas how to bring liberations in all these dimensions at the same time. His liberating actions towards liberation are too abstract even though localisation and recognition of all five dimensions at the same time are good start to deal with. However, we may find more specific solution to that problem in the following examination.

Regarding the achievement of socio-economic justice, Moltmann says that a redistribution of economic power and control of economic power must be done. Also, human emancipation must be reached as well in a way to liberate men from self-alienation, anxiety, superiority and repression. Furthermore, he shortly gives an explanation that peace with nature must be achieved without industrial and technological pollution. Human beings need to recognise that nature is their environment with its own rights. Moreover, Moltmann gives a very abstract and short explanation regarding the fifth vicious cycle, which is meaningless of life. He says that human beings and nature can take part in God's fullness of meaning and potentiality, if God is seen as God who will be present in his new creation. The complete coming of God will bring consummation of the freedom of God's people and nature. Despite emptiness and all annihilating experiences, Moltmann explains that the cross of Christ gives humans the courage to be.

In connection with Moltmann's interpretation of vicious cycles, we should add and illuminate his liberating actions with the proper meaning of human freedom as well. The meaning of human freedom may help the mentioned liberating actions in revealing and breaking the vicious cycles in today's world.

As already mentioned, the first definition is freedom as domination. The only person who is free is the one who has power. All who are subjugated to that person are in his bondage. The freedom of that dominant person has a function of property. The second definition of freedom is freedom as a free community. Freedom in this case is the concept of communicative freedom and intertwined relationships. This kind of freedom has the social side and it is able to establish a free society full of love and solidarity. The social concept of

freedom is justice while the ethical concept is solidarity. "The truth of human freedom lies in the love that breaks down barriers. It leads to unhindered, open communities in solidarity. It is only this freedom as community that can heal the wounds which freedom as lordship has inflicted, and still inflicts today." (Moltmann 1981, 216).

The third definition of human freedom goes toward a future where freedom is not a possession but an event. This kind of freedom needs to be in the process of creating liberty. It is important to constantly 'become free' (Moltmann 1999, 155–160). "We are not yet in 'the realm of freedom' itself, but only on liberating paths which lead out of the old conditions of the past into the new possibilities of the future. In history, and if we follow the remembrances of the Bible, we find freedom in the continual exodus from enslavement and lethargy, and on the long march through the desert; but not yet in the promised land, which is 'the end of history' ... we have to use our freedom every day." (Moltmann 1999, 161).

The second and third definitions of human freedom bring a new challenge to the church of discipleship to practice concrete solidarity with the all victims¹⁰⁸ of vicious circles of death in this world. Life of Christians must be a life of true followers and disciples of the crucified Christ because the crucified Christ brings concrete change in their life and the circumstances in which they live. Accordingly, a theology of cross is a practical theory (Moltmann 1974, 25). Moltmann has presented God in whom love and freedom overlap with one another. Furthermore, following Augustine, Moltmann claims that the highest concept of freedom is a teleological conception of freedom as freedom in the self-communication of the good.

It must be underlined that Moltmann's theology is responsive and accountable to the matters and problems pressing upon the church and humanity in our days. His constant contribution may be found in his concept of the Trinity and necessity to return to the Trinitarian God. This is a lasting challenge of the coming generations to pursue this divine fellowship of love and experience the fellowship of the kingdom of God. The main aim of Moltmann's Trinitarian theology is to bring faithful disciples into the heart of Trinitarian fellowship, which will help them to create a society of socio-economic equality, justice, human solidarity and love. Also, socio-economic justice will be in harmony with ecological justice of nature that reflects the immanent kingdom of God described with the biblical message of Sabbath-Jubilee in Lev 25; Is 61 and Lk 4.

108 About theology from amidst the victims see e.g. Sobrino (1996a, 164–175).

Conclusion

The message of biblical Jubilee is exceedingly rich in insights in terms of socio-economic and moral-spiritual issues and is capable of offering positive solutions to some of the main problems of today's world. This study offers the trajectory and perspectives of the biblical Jubilee and its application for the reading-listening community in today's world.

The biblical message of Jubilee as legal, socio-economic, prophetic, messianic, and eschatological concepts have been found in Lev 25; Is 61 and Lk 4. The trajectory of the exegesis of Lev 25; Is 61 and Lk 4 has shown that these texts contain the same message of Jubilee even though they have different historical, socio-economic, political, cultural backgrounds, and are different literary genres. The message of Jubilee, in its close connection with the message of Sabbath/seventh year, is a message that is grounded in its biblical continuity and seen as the word of God, relevant for the present time. This study discloses the implication of the biblical Jubilee in connection with the main problems of today's world, such as poverty, modern-day slavery, and the financial global crisis. These main problems of today's world are detected and identified with Moltmann's explanation of the vicious circles of death.

This study uses a hermeneutical code of intertextual reading and interpreting the message of Jubilee in order to apply the biblical message of Jubilee in today's world. In order to deal with the mentioned problems of today's world in correlation with the message of biblical Jubilee, a hermeneutical approach based on Moltmann's concept of the social doctrine of the Trinity is used. The synthesis of the analysis of the biblical texts regarding the theme of Sabbath/Jubilee and Moltmann's understanding of this subject reveals the meaning and significance of the topic, how it is recognised, as well as its implications in today's world. Also, this synthesis offers a deeper and richer understanding of the subject and reveals a new vision and starting point for socio-economic, political and ecological reform in our time.

This study has also conducted a trajectory and has revealed perspectives of the biblical Jubilee in the first four chapters. The analysis of the theme of Jubilee in Lev 25; Is 61 and Lk 4 includes some other Jubilee connections and allusions with the themes of the Sabbath and the Sabbath year in Exod 21:1–6, 7–11; 23:10–12; Deut 15:1–18; Is 58:1–14; Lk 4:16–30; 4:31–37; 6:1–5, 6–11; 13:10–17; 14:1–6. The analysis of Exod 21:1–6, 7–11; 23:10–12; Lev 25; Deut 15:1–18 reveals the connection between the theme of Jubilee and the Sabbath/Sabbath year in the laws of Pentateuch. The study of the theme of Sabbath in Is 58 enlightens the examination of the year of God's favour in Is

61, while the texts on the Sabbath in Lk 4:16–30; 4:31–37; 6:1–5, 6–11; 13:10–17; 14:1–6 help to determine the meaning of the year of God's favour in Lk 4:16–21.

The cyclical, fifty-year structure of the Jubilee is not mentioned anywhere in the Scripture outside Lev 25. This can be the reason why the message of Lev 25 is paradoxically at the same time a very important but also neglected message. Thus, this study offers a new way of reading and interpreting the message of Jubilee, which is relevant for us today, showing the importance of this biblical message for the reading-listening community in today's world.

Our hermeneutical code for the intertextual reading and interpreting of the message of Jubilee offers a new radical-alternative way of applying this message in today's world using Moltmann's interpretation of the biblical message of Jubilee in the fifth chapter. In doing so, this study uses only one fragment of Moltmann's complex theological work related to the themes of Sabbath/Jubilee. The synthesis of the analysis of the biblical texts on Jubilee and Moltmann's interpretation of the subject has revealed a deeper meaning and significance of the biblical Jubilee which, in turn, leads toward its appropriate application in today's world.

The first chapter investigated the themes of the Sabbath day, the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee in the laws of the Pentateuch and discovered the historical layout of the sources. With the help of historical-literary-source criticism, this study concludes that the Holiness Code interprets and uses the older traditions of the Book of the Covenant, the Deuteronomic laws and the Priestly Code in the Pentateuch. H is an innovator who speaks about a new concept of the Sabbath of the land. The legislations of the Sabbath, the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee are interconnected and they create a sacred cycle of time, which marks the sacred order of life.

The Sabbath day is a conceptual model for the legislations of the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee. The seventh year and the Sabbath day are times of rest in Exod 23:10–12. The seventh year is defined as the Sabbath year for the land when the seventh day of rest becomes the fixed weekly Sabbath in Lev 25:2–5. The year of rest or fallow year becomes a fixed institution to be observed at the same time by the entire society according to Lev 25:2–5. The seventh year in Exod 23:10–12 is redefined in Lev 25:2–5. H brings an innovation into the Sabbath ideology by formulating the seventh year as a Sabbath. Regarding the socio-economic, humanitarian purpose of the Sabbath in Exod 23:12 and Deut 5:12–14, this study concludes that H also addresses this socio-economic, humanitarian concern but in its Sabbath year legislation. Also, the concept of holiness in H is extended to laypersons and is combined with the keeping of the Sabbath day and the performance of socio-economic justice. This reveals that

the cessation of all activities during the sacred cyclical times has an influence on the religious and socio-economic life in societies.

The first chapter reveals the social and cultural relation between the laws of CC (Exod 21:1–6, 7–11; 23:10–12), D (Deut 15:1–18) and H (Lev 25:39–43, 47–55), showing the connection between these legislations. The examination of these texts shows that the legislation of H regarding slavery and bonded workers, concretely in Lev 25, is quite different from those described in Exod 21 and Deut 15. H redefines the possibility for the Israelites in the earliest legislations of CC and D with regards to the slavery of non-Israelites. H abolishes permanent slavery for the Israelites. In H, chattel-slavery is abolished while debt-slavery becomes labour for income. Bonded labourers have the possibility to live and labour until their parcel of land is returned to them in the year of Jubilee (Lev 25:39–40, 53).

Lev 25 brings a completely new legislation of the year of Jubilee, which replaces the regulations concerning the release of slaves after six years of service. Six years of service is prolonged to a maximum of fifty years and all workers must be treated with respect by their masters. Lev 25 brings a fixed, universal program that replaces an unfixed and individual system applied to each slave individually and his or her seven-year period of service. The Israelites can only be God's slaves because he brought them out from the land of Egypt. God is the only owner of the land and his people and they are treated equally in Lev 25:23b, 55a. It should be underlined that the legislations concerning the Sabbath year and the Jubilee year describe an agricultural society in Israel in order to stabilise the socio-economic situation of society.

The institution of Jubilee was the last possible measure when all other institutions failed. The Jubilee institution offered the last chance for a new beginning for all the needy when all other religious, socio-economic structures were ineffective. In Lev 25, in a situation where the institution of redemption was not used, the institution of the Jubilee year needed to be activated. Also, in Lev 25, a redeemer does not have the right to possess for himself the land or an indebted person in perpetuity.

Regarding the historical dating of the Jubilee described in Lev 25, scholars do not agree and their dating ranges from a very early date cc 12th century B.C.E. to cc 5th century B.C.E. This study concludes that the legislation of the Jubilee year in Lev 25 reveals a new interpretation of the oldest legislations from Exod 21–23 and Deut 15. Accordingly, this study has established that the legislation of Jubilee in Lev 25 was implemented during the exilic and post-exilic time. However, this study is not able to prove the concrete implementation or the practise of the Jubilee legislation every fifty years throughout the history of God's people.

The analysis of the theme of Jubilee in Lev 25 has demonstrated its several meanings. The Jubilee year means: the year of liberty every fifty years; the proclamation of freedom throughout the land; the most radical socio-economic concept for society; return to family and land (every possession needs to be returned to its original owner); the restoration of individual life, family and property; a national fixed festival; the equality of all Israelites; rest for the people and the land; release from exploitation and oppression; the prevention of the loss of property; injustice, and economic crisis; the establishment of a just socio-economic society.

The study of Is 58 and 61 in the second chapter reveals the necessity to understand the message of the urgent call in Is 58 for social justice as a request for an authentic community in order to understand the prophetic vision of the year of God's favour described in Is 61. The analysis of Is 58 reveals the fact that for an authentic God-community, it is necessary to have a sincere religious life and practice socio-economic justice. In this context, socio-economic justice includes ethical, legal and covenant right relationships.

This study underlines that the image of 'yoke' in Is 58 needs to be seen as a kind of socio-economic misconduct that treats people like animals. People are under the 'yoke' because of their financial debts. Breaking every kind of yoke and oppression will bring socio-economic freedom and establish right relationships and just societies. This is a very important indicator, which is very similar to the legislation of the Jubilee year described in Lev 25. The acceptable 'Jubilee' day in Is 58 is a time of healing, release from debt slavery and return to family property.

The second chapter also gives a short overview regarding the determination of the anointed person and deals with the year of God's favour in Is 61. This study cannot bring concrete evidence concerning the anointed person in Is 61. However, after analysing Is 61, this study has shown that the anointed person may be King Cyrus because he was chosen to release the Israelites from exile. Also, Cyrus' decree can be seen as some kind of a proto-Jubilee declaration that gave the Israelites the possibility to be released from exile and return to their land. We can recognise the year of God's favour in Cyrus' 'proto-Jubilee' declaration described in Is 61 as a historical event.

Also, the anointed person can be recognised as a prophet-servant who was aware of his mediatory role between God and his people. This study recognises the anointed person as king Cyrus and the prophet Trito-Isaiah who partially fulfilled the mission described in Is 61. The anointed person in Is 61 has received authority from the Spirit of the Lord to perform God's specific ministry, especially to proclaim the year of God's favour. The year of God's favour is announced in order to bring transformation into human lives and to proclaim freedom from debt slavery (Lev 25:10; Is 58:6; 61:1).

Is 61 uses the Hebrew word *דְּרוֹר*, which means liberty or freedom, referring to the release of slaves and the return of lost property in the year of God's favour. This study concludes that Is 61 uses a very similar language to Lev 25:10 and it is obvious that this reference to freedom in Is 61 refers to the practise of the Jubilee in Lev 25. This word is used only once in the book of Isaiah and refers to the proclamation of the good news to the imprisoned, the broken, the troubled, the poor and the needy. The year of God's favour in Is 61:1 ff. gives a simultaneous eschatological messianic meaning to Lev 25:10.

The theme of Jubilee freedom is the background for the focus on socio-economic justice because the practise of socio-economic justice reflects the story of God's deliverance from slavery. The topic of exile is used as a metaphor for poverty, debt slavery, homelessness, and captivity. Returning from exile to the land is presented as liberation from imprisonment due to the yoke of debt and any kind of oppression and bondage. Liberation from captivity can mean the transformation of society, its resettlement, and ultimately its restoration. This is very similar to the message of Lev 25 where the legislation of the Jubilee year is closely connected with the theme of exodus from exile and God's deliverance (Lev 25:38, 55). Socio-economic justice must be practiced in the same way that God delivered his people from slavery and gave them a new start in their land. The images of exodus, exile and freedom are closely linked to the theme of socio-economic justice in Lev 25; Is 58 and 61. The main message of these chapters is the establishment of a free society with right relationships without slavery or exploitation.

Regarding the time of the complete realisation of the year of God's favour and its renewal, this study concludes that it has not yet been completely realised in the exilic or post-exilic historical event. The complete realisation will take place in an eschatological time. Good news comes from a specific historical happening and will affect other historical events as well. We can find the best example of this when Jesus quotes the book of Isaiah in Lk 4 since Jesus' public ministry reflects the described prophetic mission in Is 61, which is closely connected with the legislation of the year of Jubilee in Lev 25. Socio-economic restoration is presented as the year of God's favour in connection with the coming of the messianic time. The phrase 'year of the Lord's favour' in Is 61 indicates a new era when God will completely fulfil his promise of salvation, blessings, and his time of grace will also arrive.

The first part of the fourth chapter contains the exegetical overview of the theme of the Sabbath day in Lk 4:16–30; 4:31–37; 6:1–5, 6–11; 13:10–17; 14:1–6. Jesus' observance and teaching about the Sabbath day was completely different from that of the Jewish leaders. Even though Jesus was aware of the religious leaders who wanted to attack and accuse him, he decided to publicly heal

the sick and help the poor, demonstrating that dignity, wholeness, and the wellbeing of human life are very important to him. Jesus publicly helped the poor and the marginalised on the Sabbath day, presenting socio-economic implications for his activities.

The findings of this study suggest that, in general, the main meaning of the Sabbath day in the Gospel of Luke is the practise of socio-economic justice and equality based on the model of the 'Sabbath economics of manna'. This model includes God's provision and the common practise of the redistribution of goods. We can say that the proper observance of the Sabbath day assumes the transformation of socio-economic relationships on personal and communal levels, based on the principles of equality and mutual respect. Accordingly, Jesus' announcement of 'good news to the poor' is very important for his teaching about the meaning of the Sabbath day because his public ministry is focused on the poor and the marginalised, who were desperately longing for his good news. In the Gospel of Luke, especially in Lk 4:16–21, this study has found the presentation of the Sabbath day as a 'little Jubilee'.

The study of the text of Lk 4:16–21 shows that Jesus read from a scroll of the prophet Isaiah 58:6; 61:1–2. Jesus uses the old Jubilee tradition in order to inaugurate his public ministry, but he reshapes and adds something new to that message. The exegetical study of the structure of Lk 4:16–21 reveals a specific rhetorical form where the climax of the text is placed in the centre of the entire text. The verses of Is 58:6 and 61:1–2 represent the climax of the passage in Lk 4:16–21. Accordingly, this is the main evidence that the author used such a well-known rhetorical form in order to show his Jewish listeners and readers that Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus is the anointed one, the Messiah-prophet who came to announce good news (Lk 4:18; Is 61:1). The messianic time begins with Jesus' proclamation that the year of God's favour has arrived. Thus, this study has shown that the prophecy from Is 58:6 and 61:1–2 has been fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ (Lk 4:21).

The parallel of the Sabbath (Is 58) and Jubilee images (Is 61) is a conceptual link to the Jubilee message of Lk 4, and all these chapters include the Jubilee associations in the form of the concept of release. The image of Jubilee is sometimes described in Sabbath terms as well. Jesus decided to apply these passages to himself saying that these prophetic messages are for his time and for the nation to whom he is referring. So, the complete release that the prophet Trito-Isaiah described is now put into action with Jesus' coming.

Furthermore, the evidence from this study indicates that the Greek word *ἀφεσις* in Is 58:6 and 61:1, the LXX's version, signifies the legislations of the laws of the Jubilee year and the Sabbath year (Exod 23:10–11; Lev 25; Deut 15:1–18), which are an important background for Lk 4. This word refers to the

remission of financial debts, forgiveness from sins and freedom from captivity. It is very important to underline that for Luke the forgiveness of sins is closely connected with the socio-economic ministry of proclaiming the good news to the poor. Personal transformation comes through the forgiveness of sins and debts, whereas communal transformation also includes socio-economic reform. Is 58 and 61 intensify the socio-economic and political implications of Jesus' message of freedom and release. The proclamation of the acceptable year of the Lord has the intention to reverse the condition of the oppressed and exploited people.

It should be concluded that the message of Lk 4:16–21 has the intention to enact a year of Jubilee in the same way as it is also presented in the legal passages of the Pentateuch, and to present it as a happening, which is connected with socio-economic and political situations. The aspects of Jubilee liberation are included in Jesus' teaching and activities. This is especially obvious in his quotation of Is 58:6 and 61:1–2 where he proclaims that his ministry starts with a peaceable-radical revolution in the form of the year of Jubilee.

The year of God's favour brings equality to society and gives a second chance to those who have become poor, landless or slaves. Also, its intention is to solve the problem of the accumulation of possessions and wealth in the hands of a few people. Lk 4 speaks of a radical message of Jubilee, referring to unacceptable exploitation and poverty. It can be underlined that the image of Jubilee in Lk 4 combines in itself socio-economic-political reform and spiritual-moral restoration and transformation. It brings freedom and wellbeing to the individual and to the whole community.

Furthermore, the author of the text reveals the idea of Jubilee as an eschatological characteristic of the kingdom of God, which has begun with Jesus' public ministry. More specifically, in and through his person and ministry, he also reveals the new time. The phrase 'the year of God's favour' in Lk 4 refers to the coming of God's kingdom in a new time of everlasting liberty from every kind of exploitation, poverty or oppression. Thus, Lk 4:18–19 refers to the Jubilee year in a specific way. The word *ἐνιαυτός* (a year) in Lk 4:19 recalls Lev 25:10 and Is 61:2 and their message of Jubilee as well. In Lk 4, the year of God's favour is inaugurated as the eschatological year and salvation is embodied in the image of Jubilee. These expressions of the eschatological Jubilee idea can be found in Lk 4:16–21; 6:20–26; 7:22; 14:7–24 as well.

Jesus is the one in whom the prophecy is fulfilled, especially when he says 'today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing'. This reflects not only the nearness of salvation, but also the fact that the liberation and the year of God's favour have been inaugurated on the historical occasion of Jesus' public ministry. The time of 'today' has begun by Jesus' proclamation of the

Jubilee. According to the Gospel of Luke, this time continues to run throughout Jesus' passion, death and resurrection until the time of *parousia*. So, the Jubilee proclamation of Lk 4:16 ff. is an event of socio-economic importance, and it is also the announcement of the advent of God's eschatological reign through Jesus' coming and his ministry.

After the exegetical trajectory of the mentioned biblical texts, the last chapter of this study brings a theological contribution to the biblical exegesis of the theme of Jubilee using Moltmann's interpretation of the themes of Sabbath/Jubilee. One of the reasons why this study uses Moltmann's discourse on the subject is his constructive model for understanding the biblical Jubilee. My contribution in this doctoral thesis can be found in my findings, extrapolation and presentation of Moltmann's discourse on the subject. Also, my aim is to make the intertextual connection between Moltmann's understanding of the topic with the analysis of the biblical message of Jubilee (especially Lev 25; Is 61; Lk 4) in order to show a different hermeneutical code and strategy of reading and understanding the Jubilee message as a manifesto that offers an alternative ethos.

This work has found in Moltmann's teaching that the year of Jubilee and the Sabbath year are closely associated with the weekly Sabbath day, and these sacred cyclical times have a biblical foundation for the spirituality of human beings and for the rest of the land. For Moltmann, the biblical theme of Jubilee is not concerned with the historical issue, i.e. whether the Jubilee year took place historically or not. He briefly concludes, without giving a detailed explanation that during the history of Israel the Sabbath year was celebrated while the year of Jubilee is historically unsure. This study has found that Moltmann primarily interprets the biblical year of Jubilee in correlation with the cosmic restoration, the transformation of God's creation, salvation, everlasting life, and especially with messianic time. Is 61 speaks about the coming of the messianic prophet who announces the Jubilee year of the End-time. The messianic prophet also brings his messianic time, which is similar to the year of Jubilee, in such a way that they both bring freedom, justice and a new beginning for the whole creation.

Moltmann interprets the theme of Jubilee on the basis of the biblical text Lk 4 in its correlation with Lev 25 and Is 61. He concludes that Is 61 and Lk 4 modify and radicalise the Jubilee legislation of Lev 25. These biblical texts contain the new messianic interpretation of the Jubilee laws about the divine economy of God's kingdom. God's coming kingdom in the history of Jesus takes the practical manifestation of his messianic realisation of the biblical laws about the year of Jubilee, i.e. the year of freedom. When Jesus announces a year of Jubilee he is referring to the messianic Sabbath without end and

not a time limited to a period of twelve months. So, with the coming of Jesus Christ, the year of Jubilee has begun.

Furthermore, this study relates the mentioned categories of poverty, modern-day slavery and the problems of the financial global crises of our time with Moltmann's interpretation of the vicious circles of death and in close connection with the message of Jubilee. The vicious circles of poverty, force, racial-cultural alienation, the industrial pollution of nature, and senselessness and godforsakenness produce desperate and hopeless socioeconomic and political structures that lead to devastation. Therefore, the problems of the present time, such as the exploitation of labour and natural resources, ecological destruction, the financial crisis, the burdens of debts and interest are very similar to the themes of Jubilee liberation. In line with Moltmann's intention that his theology must be relevant and involved in all these public affairs of societies, he proposes several solutions for the practise of liberation.

In order to take Moltmann's practise of Jubilee liberation in his dealings with the vicious circles of death one step further, this study offers a new proposal based on Moltmann's concept of the social doctrine of the Trinity. One of the reasons why this study deals with Moltmann's concept of the social doctrine of the Trinity is the fact that our biblical texts on Jubilee directly or indirectly speak of an ongoing transformation of individuals and the whole of society, which is guided by God's presence in creation. We may say that the Jubilee messages of Lev 25; Is 61 and Lk 4 assume that in order for God's people to experience their personal and communal transformation and participate in God's divine nature, they need to be exalted in God's life. This ascending transformation is generated as an individual's understanding of himself and his role in the community is changed. These transformed individuals will then be prepared to participate in the reshaping of their communities. After that, these transformed and renewed societies will create socio-economic justice through their ethical, legal and covenant right relationships.

Accordingly, this study implies that Moltmann's concept of the social doctrine of the Trinity is complementary to the Jubilee idea of an ongoing transformation. The social doctrine of the Trinity refers to the essential nature of our socio-economic relationships and the way in which we think about the reality of God, our world and ourselves. The way we see God influences the way we think and relate to ourselves and the world. Moltmann speaks about the unity and diversity of the distinctive divine persons in the Trinity. The relationships of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are relationships of fellowship that are open to the world. The Trinity is an inviting community, open to share itself with others and to unite the whole of creation in itself and with itself. The relations between the divine persons in the Trinity explain in a concrete way

how to conceptualise church and society as a community. God's revelation of himself as the Trinity can influence socio-economic and ecclesial realities. The experience of that influence assumes human beings to be in the image of the Triune God.

This study has shown that Moltmann's Trinitarian social doctrine reveals a prototype of true, faithful, human community, free of any kind of dominion or exploitation. Their relation must be seen in analogy and not in identity. It is crucial to see and perceive the concept of God's unity in the *perichoresis* of the divine persons who are co-inherent in one another without commixture or coalescence. The social doctrine of the Trinity represents a freedom established by mutual participation in life. The Triune God is free in love and is ready to free others in his love.

Moltmann instructs that human beings need to participate in the inner life of the Triune God (John 17:21). They are invited to contemplate the life of the divine persons and their actions in the world. Human actions in the world should be an imitation of the divine love's freedom and the divine labour of love's suffering. Especially human actions should be an imitation of the person and work of Jesus toward others, particularly the marginalised and the poor. Jesus' proclamation of the good news to the poor reveals a new reality with a new dignity of God's people. Human beings whose social vision and practices reflect the image of the Triune God are exalted into the divine fellowship in which they give themselves to each other and receive themselves back renewed in love and freedom.

All of these show why the question of freedom is very important for Moltmann and how it is connected with the theme of Jubilee. Moltmann prefers the concept of freedom as sociality and free community, especially in its correlation with the concept of the biblical Jubilee. The Lord's Prayer, especially the part 'forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors' means a true Jubilee prayer of freedom, which in itself contains the idea of sociality. Freedom as sociality can be experienced through socio-economic and ecological reforms of societies. When freedom as sociality is experienced and practiced, then it will generate relationships of equality, love, acceptance and mutual respect.

Furthermore, freedom as sociality will bring reconciliation and healing to all those who are afflicted by exploitation, injustice, domination. Freedom as sociality connects and unites the human soul with her body, the individual with other people, societies with nature and all of creation with the Creator. Freedom as a free community includes communicative freedom and intertwined relationships. It is a social community able to create a free society of love, solidarity and justice. The social and ethical concept of freedom is justice and solidarity. Freedom as a free community can heal the wounds and pain which

freedom as dominion has inflicted and still inflicts. Moltmann underlines the necessity of constantly becoming free. In the history of God's people, the idea of freedom can be found in the continual exodus from slavery and meaninglessness on the long journey through the desert but not yet into the Promised Land, which is 'the end of history' for Moltmann. Therefore, God's people have to use their freedom every day.

This study underlines that it is necessary to take Moltmann's interpretation of freedom into consideration in order to understand the meaning and uniqueness of the biblical concept of Jubilee. Time moves through the rhythms of expectation for the coming of the messianic everlasting year of freedom by the succession of Sabbath days, Sabbath years and Jubilee years. Regarding the realisation of the message in today's world, the reading-listening community is invited to practice the messianic everlasting year of freedom. This year of Jubilee freedom has come, but it has not yet been fully revealed. However, in this present time, the reading-listening community has to follow Jesus' example and practice his teaching by forgiving debts, and liberating the oppressed and the exploited from any kind of cruel domination. Moltmann underlines that this kind of proper behaviour will bring an alternative to this worldly system of exploitation, injustice and discrimination. The year of Jubilee needs to be understood through the person and ministry of Jesus Christ in order to become the alternative programme of Jesus' faithful reading-listening community.

The message of Jubilee brings a new challenge to this community to practice real solidarity with all the victims of the vicious circles of death in this world. The life of Christians must be a life of true disciples of Jesus, who has brought a concrete change in their lives and in the circumstances in which they live. Also, Jesus has manifested the year of Jubilee by showing mercy to the poor, by calling all those who are weary to himself, by bringing good news to the poor and by gathering the exploited and oppressed into the liberty of his fellowship. This year of Jubilee contains the idea of redistribution of goods revealing an alternative ethos since the Jubilee is indeed an alternative theological and socio-economic ethos.

This study concludes that the synthesis of our biblical-theological interpretation of Jubilee reveals one of the plausible alternatives to the most difficult challenges in the world today. Christians are challenged and called to follow and to participate in the "economy" of the Trinitarian fellowship of love. Only through this Trinitarian fellowship will they be able to establish a new beginning, a new foundation that can lead them to a society of freedom, solidarity and socio-economic justice. In the conclusion of this study, we should say that the significance of the Jubilee message does not lie in its exact and literary application to a contemporary situation. Rather, it is manifested as a frame-

work, and an impetus for reflection, a vision for action. In order to be an alternative ethos, the biblical Jubilee is first a manifesto then a call for an alternative lifestyle based on the ancient text of Jubilee.

From this it is obvious that the full meaning of the message becomes clearer when we take into consideration the intertextuality of the biblical-theological message of Jubilee. First of all, the message of Jubilee is an alternative ethos of a new concept of lifestyle. It is necessary for individuals and communities to accept this new concept of lifestyle in order to establish a new socio-economic reality and renew moral-spiritual lives. This is because the message of Jubilee should be taken as a response to the challenges of our times. The message of Jubilee reveals a significant way to deal with today's challenges, offering the personal and social transformation that today's world so urgently needs. It is the constant struggle of Christians to unveil and to unleash the biblical-theological socio-economic vision of Jubilee as a constant reality in our world.

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